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Klipsun Magazine, 1995, Volume 32, Issue 02 - January

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Western Washington University

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magazine

January 1995

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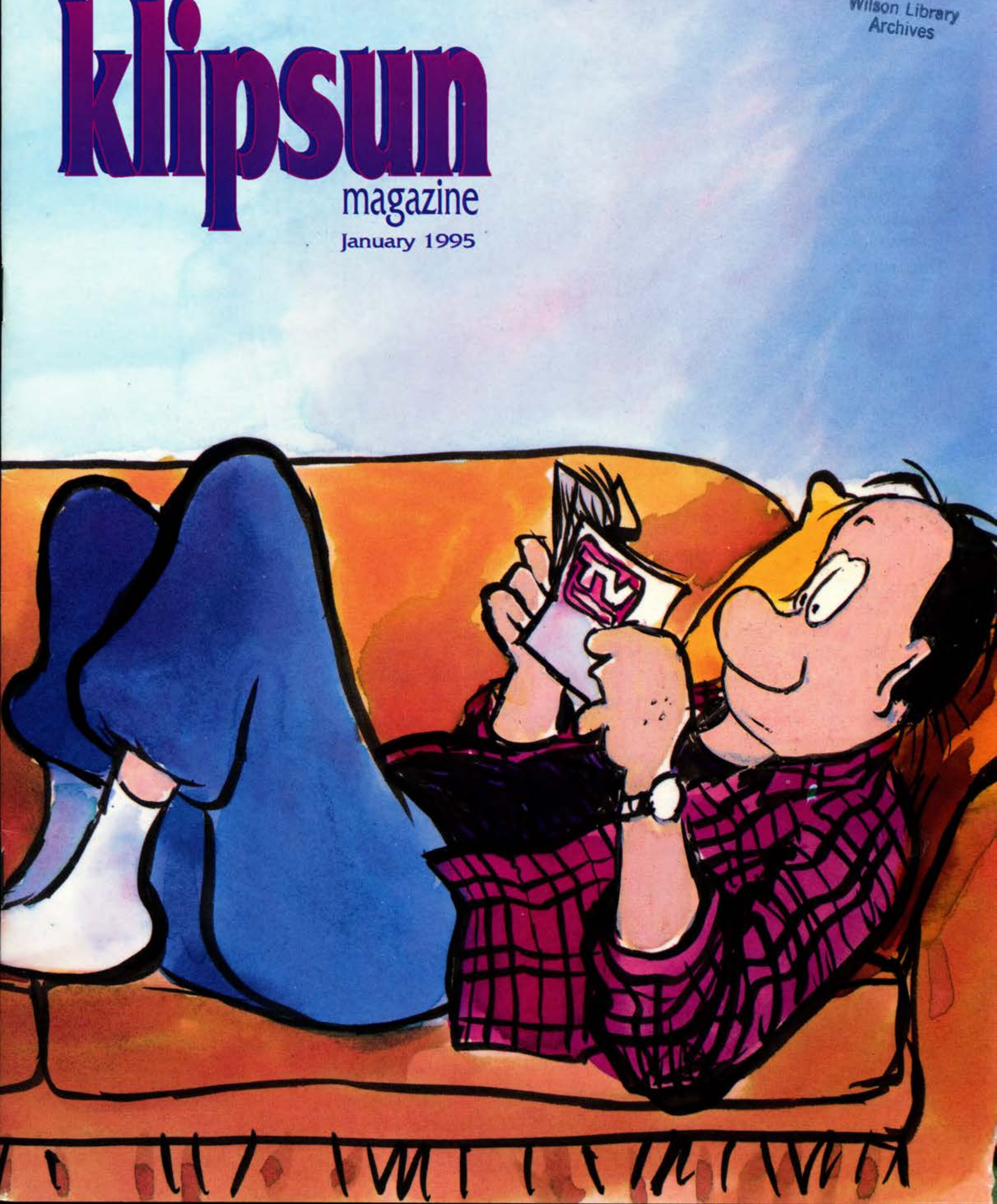

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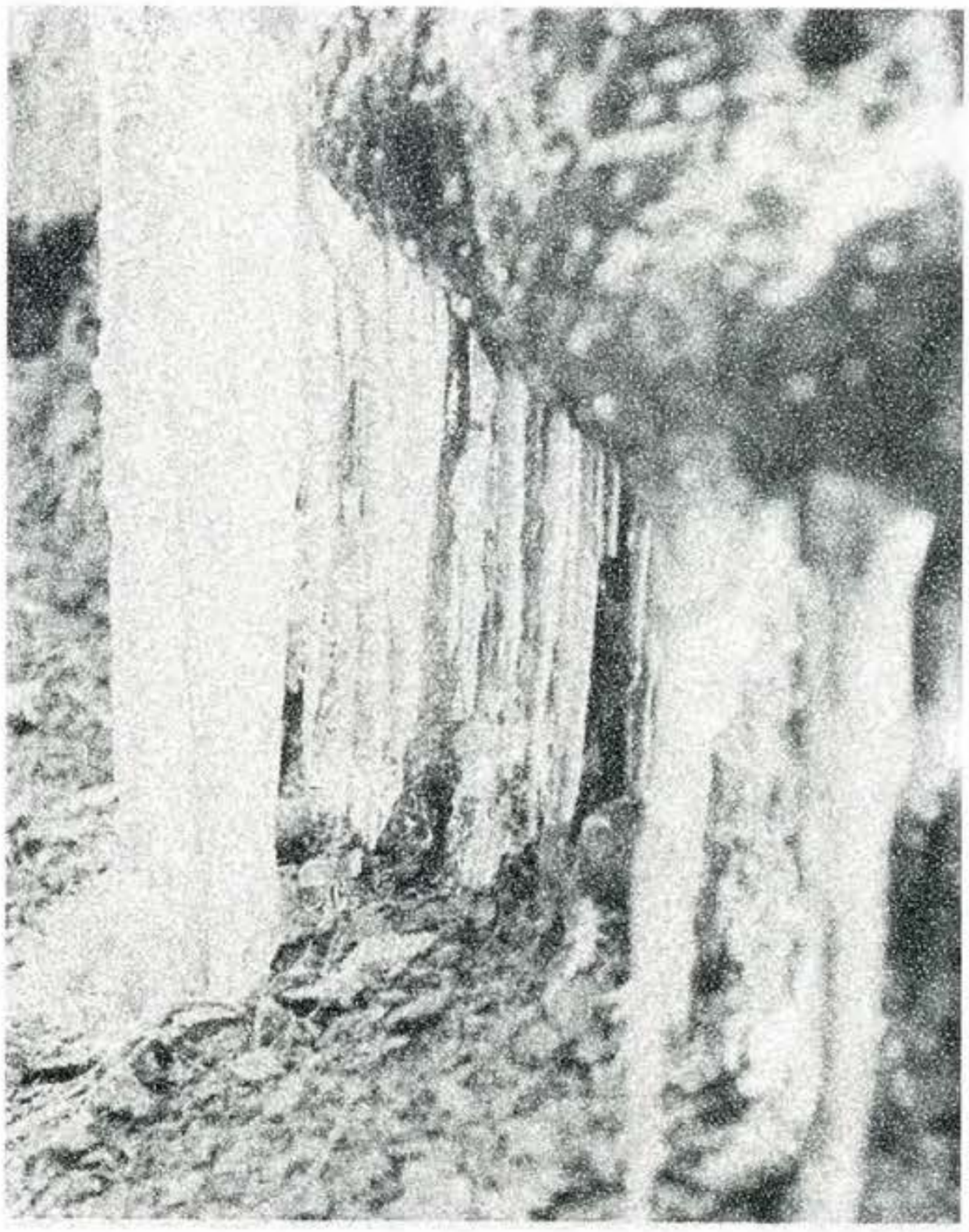

Photo by Cassandra Burdsal

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Letter from the Editor:

Welcome to the first issue of Klipsun for 1995. Unfortunately for me, this happens to be my last issue as editor-in-chief, but hey, what an issue to go out on! Both the writing and editorial staffs worked hard to produce this magazine and I think the quality definitely represents their level of commitment.

Klipsun is reaching new levels. With the writing staff digging deep for excellent stories and the editors endlessly tapping their creative juices, the magazine is only getting better. I can only dream of where it can go in the future. The capabilities are there somewhere within the dark recesses of College Hall.

The cover story for this issue has been an amazing process for us. Hadiee Jezek came to us with a story idea about Brian Basset, the mind and pen behind the nationally syndicated comic strip "Adam" and former political cartoonist for *The Seattle Times*.

During the groundwork for the story, not only did he graciously agree to the interviews, he also agreed to produce an original piece of art to adorn the cover of Klipsun. We can't begin to express our gratitude for his efforts. The cover art is incredible.

This issue of Klipsun is full of great stories probing serious issues, shedding light on the dark mind of Trent Reznor and offering an alternative way to combat college stress. Again, I think you'll find there's something for everybody.

As you read this, Klipsun is being served by a new editor, Ryan McMenamin. I wish him, and all of his staff, the best of luck with the challenge ahead. I know I'm going to miss it.

Thanks for reading,

Nick Davis

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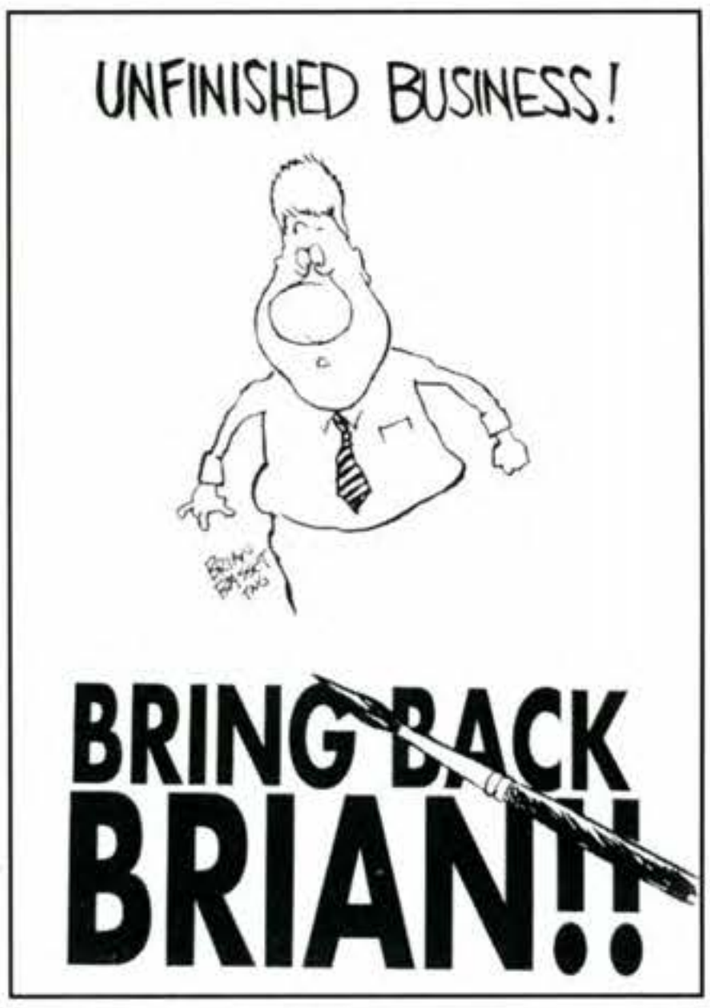

The earth shakes a they rumble along

Story by Hilary Parker

Today's cowboy has a new horse. This horse is made of steel and chrome. This horse can be as black as midnight or as bright blue as the summer sky. This horse is a brute, yet fragile. This horse is a Harley-Davidson motorcycle.

Like the horse of yesteryear, the Harley of today just requires a cowhand to throw his leg over the side of the beast and head off onto the range. And, as with the cowboy lifestyle of the past, there exists a mystique in its freedom and individuality. It's something truly American, and this hoss tells us every time its engine rumbles to life. Even the motto of this new breed seems to echo a rugged past: "Live to ride. Ride to live."

The audacious sounds emitted from the Harley-Davidson engines force

American ingenuity started the Harley-Davidson company. William S. Harley and Arthur Davidson began, not by building motorcycles, but rather motor boats for their fishing trips. From there, they would build motor-powered bicycles, which would develop into the first Harley-Davidson motorcycles. The first actual production year was 1903, when Harley-Davidson sold two or three motorcycles.

In its 91-year history, Harley-Davidson has had ups and downs. According to the "Harley-Davidson History in a Nutshell," published by the Arizona Private School Association, the company was on the brink of bankruptcy because of the popularity of Japanese motorcycles. In 1969, Harley-Davidson was purchased by AMF Inc., a company known for mainly producing bowling balls. To compete with the Japanese motorcycles AMF sped up production and neglected quality. Ironically, Harley-Davidson had given the Japanese the plans to build motorcycles in 1929. In the '70s, Harley-Davidson motorcycles were unreliable and had only the name, not quality, to sell them. Fortunately, the original company owners had signed a 10-year buy-back agreement with AMF, and in 1981, the company was back in the hands of its original family.

Since then, those intimate with the business and its loyal customers say they feel quality has improved and the increase in production has not jeopardized the high caliber of the machine. Producing more than 80,000 bikes per year, the company sells out the model year before it is off the production line. Harley-Davidson now has a goal of producing 100,000 motorcycles a year by 1996. The price tag on a Harley ranges from $6,000 to $25,000.

"The bikes are getting better and better each year. I can sell a motorcycle without making excuses," said Chuck Lucero, one of Harley's loyal salesmen and customers. He works at Bellingham Harley-Davidson a day-and-a-half each week, just to be around the bikes. "Now I can say I ride a Harley because it's a damn good bike."

Lucero, a mixture of a gentle giant, a mountain man and a tough-guy biker, stands more than six-feet tall with a top-heavy frame. He has been riding Harleys for 21 years and says the bikes have always had that "Harley-Davidson mystique." When Indian Motorcycles went out of business in the 1950s, Harley was the only American motorcycle left, and this just increased their popularity, he said.

"More and more people have got to have them 'just because,'" said Lucero, 43. When he isn't working at the Harley shop, Lucero works at St. Joseph Hospital. There, he said, people from maintenance to anesthesiology ride Harleys.

Many of today's modern cowboys aren't "boys" at all, but women. Don Cowart, 20, an employee at Bellingham Harley-Davidson, said fewer women than men ride, but groups such as "Ladies of Harley," an all-woman chapter of the Harley Owners' Group (HOG), offer a place for women bikers.

children to cover their ears as their bodies bounce along the sidewalk

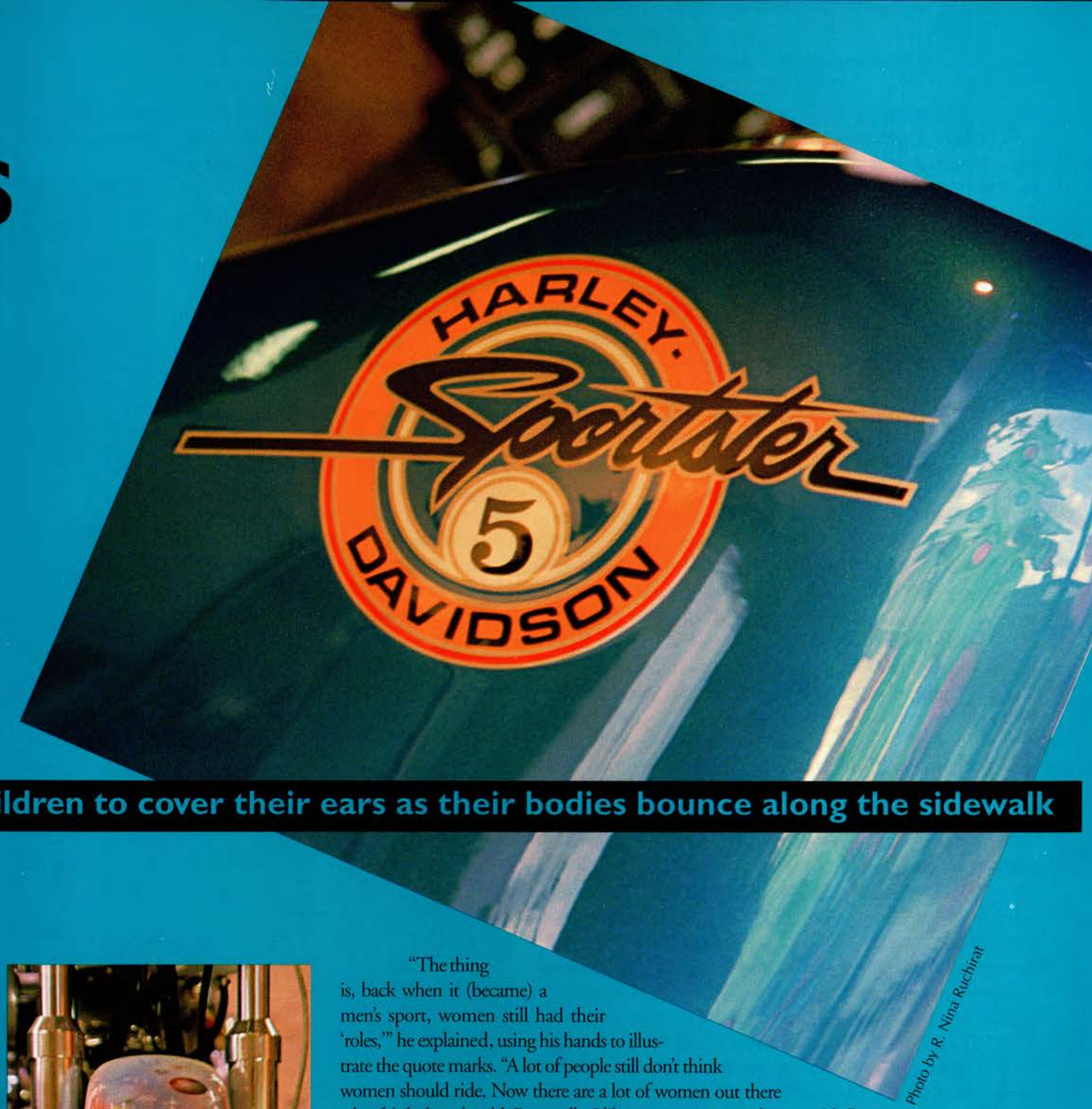

Photo by R. Nina Ruchirat

Photo by R. Nina Ruchirat

"The thing is, back when it (became) a men's sport, women still had their 'roles,'" he explained, using his hands to illustrate the quote marks. "A lot of people still don't think women should ride. Now there are a lot of women out there who think they should. Personally, I like to see everyone who can, ride."

Cathy Brooker and Reida Jones are two women who love to feel the wind run through their hair, but they also agree there was a time when it wasn't proper for a woman to ride a motorcycle.

"It's really catching on more and more," said Brooker, a genial redhead who is the new director of the Whatcom County chapter of HOG. "Some (women) prefer to be on the back. It's less cold," she added.

"There's still a lot of old crusty bikers, banditos, who don't want women to ride." On the other hand, she said, "A lot of men would rather not pack someone on the back."

"I think it used to be a man's toy," said Jones, 48. "Now, they're making the colors more attractive to women." The days of the traditional chrome and black Harleys are long gone. Today, the company offers colors such as victory red, aqua pearl and nugget yellow.

Jones, dressed in old jeans and a ladies-style Harley-Davidson shirt, said respect for women riders is something that was not common in years past, but is present today. "I think (the men) made fun of it, too," she said. "We see a lot more of women riders. We've come a long way."

Brooker said most women ride Sportsters, Harley's smallest bike, because often their feet wouldn't otherwise touch the ground. "I'm in love with my Sportster. It takes me everywhere I want to go."

Brooker, 44, has been riding a Harley for only four years now, but she has been in love with motorcycles since she was a young girl. "I was sort of drawn into it by my brother when I was this high," she said, motioning with her hand about three feet off the floor. "It's what I wanted to do."

Jones, too, was interested in motorcycles as a child. "I guess I must have felt the lure of motorcycles when I was just a kid," she said, remembering one blue and white motorcycle in particular.

Today, it's not just a brightly colored bike that draws her to riding. "It's just something about the freedom, the camaraderie," she said of riding Harleys.

Lucero thinks the idea of being a Harley biker is what draws people to the motorcycles. "Frankly, I think it's the rebel image. They don't want to be real outlaws, it's just a matter of having it."

Patrick Weitemeyer, another Harley owner, agreed, "The movies have made (the biker) the bad guy ... I'd say there's some kind of mystique.

"I have a friend who's 55," continued Weitemeyer. "He wants a Harley, and even if he's got it for only one year, he can still say he's owned a Harley — because that's the image."

But for Lucero, there's more to the motorcycles than just image. "When you're on a motorcycle ... you have a one-to-one relationship with the motorcycle," he explained. "You have to *ride* a motorcycle. You're tired, beat by the wind, you feel like you've made a journey. You experience the trip on a motorcycle. Riding on a Harley just heightens that."

The sound of the bike is another incredibly powerful part of its appeal. "It's got a sound to it, that — ," Lucero couldn't find the words. "The Japanese, they've tried to imitate it. They can't make 'em sound like Harleys ... It sounds American." The sound, and the vibration from the V-2 engine, a design unique to Harley-Davidson motorcycles, are something Lucero said really can't be explained "until you throw your leg over it and ride."

Weitemeyer explains more about the V-2: "My first bike was a Suzuki. Well, the Suzuki is a fast bike; it's quick and it rumbles a bit — it's more like a sewing machine. ... It's the engine, the difference is the vibration in the V-2 engine."

Riding a Harley becomes part of the rider's life, part of the family. "You try selling it, it's like part of your life is gone," Lucero declared. He remembers selling his Harley when he was first married, only to look longingly at every motorcycle he saw.

"My wife asked me why I sold my motorcycle. I said 'Because of you.' She asked 'Why'd you do that? I like to ride too.'" That was enough to convince Lucero to sell back his new Jeep at a loss and buy a Harley.

"Until I can't actually throw my leg over my bike, I'll still be riding them," he said. "I know guys in their seventies who are still riding. That's what I intend to do."

Having moved from behind the counter while talking, Lucero pointed out the merchandise that accompanies the motorcycles. A $300 Harley-Davidson clock hangs on the wall, and Harley Christmas cards are displayed on a glass shelf. "You just don't see aftermarket support like this," he stated. Lining other walls are accessories for the motorcycles themselves.

Weitemeyer, a biker from Canada, has come to Bellingham to buy some of these accessories for his bike. Like the jewelry and fashions we wear, the accessories the bike wears say a lot about its personality, and the owner's.

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"People want an independent design," said Weitemeyer. "Everyone changes them to their personality. You've got to build that bike yourself."

"You can really individualize your Harley more than other bikes," Cowart added. "Make it an extension of yourself." Beside the Harley-Davidson company's catalog for add-ons are

several thick part books full of accessories for bikes. At any other bike dealership, these kinds of items would not be available.

sandra Burdsal

"Accessorize 'til it hurts," Brooker declared. "Chrome is a big part. I've spent quite a bit of money, a lot of it on chrome. It's a never-ending process." Brooker said she has sunk an extra $3,000 into her $6,000 bike for chrome.

In fact, a used bike with custom additions will cost more than its original price tag. "I could have bought a BMW, but the Harley has a better resale value," said Weitemeyer, smiling as if to say he'd never dream of buying a BMW.

Weitemeyer said it isn't uncommon for a person to add $5,000 to $6,000 worth of extras on a bike in the first year, and a custom paint-job will run another $3,000 to $5,000. Accessories on a bike can include new handle bars, plates with Harley's bald eagle emblem, chrome covers for nuts and bolts or new tailpipes.

"H.D. stands for 'hundred dollars,' according to some people," Cowart quipped,

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who typically sees bikers walk out of the shop with more than $100 of parts and merchandise. Weitemeyer will leave having spent just more than $200. Among his purchases were wires for his electrical system, chrome covers for nuts and bolts, a decorative chrome plate with the Harley emblem and a turquoise and black head wrap.

Weitemeyer estimated, at 43, he is the average-aged Harley owner, mainly because the high price-tag on the bike is enough alone to deter most younger buyers.

He also has that Harley allegiance. Weitemeyer has already put $10,000 down on a currently undesigned 100th anniversary edition Harley-Davidson.

"That's how much faith I've got in it. Ten-thousand up front now and I don't even know what it looks like."

Weitemeyer believes Harley-Davidson symbolizes freedom and individuality; he sees it in the people who ride them. "There's different kinds of bikers, fair weather bikers — and the ones toting telephones," he joked, interrupting his thought as a man clad in a black leather jacket and wearing a blue bandanna around his head walked into the shop talking on an ultra-slim cellular phone.

Heading outside into a crisp November afternoon, Weitemeyer sat on the pavement next to his bike to add some of his new parts to it before heading back over the border. "You don't usually catch a biker long on a day like this," he commented as he ripped out a spark plug on his black touring bike with red and orange pinstripes. He calls it the Cadillac of motorcycles.

As the afternoon shadows grew longer and the air colder, Weitemeyer said, "The real bikers are starting to disappear. It's a dying breed."

The new breed of biker is not what Brooker described, the old, crusty bandito. Instead, today's biker is most likely to be family-oriented. At the November HOG meeting, whole families attended while mothers and fathers discussed rides, rallies and revenue.

In part, HOG exists "to change the image of the motorcycle enthusiast," said Brooker. The HOG regularly raises money for charity, as well as collecting donations of toys for children during the holiday season.

Jones, secretary of the Ladies of Harley, pointed out there isn't really a difference between Harley riders and the rest of us. "We're real people, we have real lives. He's a family man," she said, pointing to one man, "Cathy works at a doctor's office. I work at Costco."

Of course, some people still fear the biker image. While traveling this summer with Jones, Brooker remembers one man at a hotel. Scrunching up her face, she imitated the old man, "I'm afraid of you people." Brooker, remembering, laughed and pointed out, "Hey, we're just people."

Perhaps the words of these people, our modern-day "cowhands," sum up the Harley-Davidson experience best.

"Once a biker, you're always gonna be a biker," Weitemeyer. promised. The kinship, like that in the old west, stretches out to every man and woman on a chrome horse. "They got no soul," said Lucero of other motorcycles. "Harley's have got a soul."

That soul is the open country, a long stretch of highway and that freedom the heart aches for. Brooker longs for it. "There's this great feeling of freedom. I'd love to ride forever."

Live to ride. Ride to live.

The San Juan Island

Water Shortage:

A Foreshadow of Our Future

Story by Tina Jo Koontz and Jeff Misel
Illustration by Bryan Frank

It looks like a regular tourist destination in the San Juans. Orca whales swim off the rocky coast. The harbor is filled with pleasure boats of all kinds. Quaint houses, bed and breakfasts, shops and restaurants make Friday Harbor a throwback to an earlier time. Historic buildings, museums and public parks reveal the island's colorful past, which included a near-war between England and the United States over the death of a pig.

On the opposite end of San Juan Island, Roche Harbor resort preserves the remnants of the island's first turn-of-the-century limestone mining industry. In the late 1800s, the Roche Harbor Lime and Cement Company was the largest lime works west of the Mississippi. The old lime kilns, quarries, generator plants and company town cottages still remain.

San Juan Island has avoided modernization by choice. It's the perfect tourist destination with no 7-11s, McDonald's restaurants or mega-malls. Friday Harbor's 1,700 people are close-knit and friendly. But, as you move around, it becomes apparent the town is not without its problems.

Along with the rest of Western Washington, San Juan Island has experienced a population boom. The population on the island has risen from 3,856 people in 1970 to 12,100 in 1994. But, unlike on the mainland, resources are limited — especially water.

Restaurants only serve water upon request. Owners of local inns ask patrons to conserve the resource by taking shorter showers and not leaving water running. Handbills inform visitors of the problem, and even city hall posts signs on toilets asking people to "only flush if it gets too gross."

People on this island are taking the problem seriously. San Juan Island is experiencing now what many authorities say will affect all of us in the future. In a way, San Juan Island's water shortage is one of the first serious tests of people's ability to conserve precious resources.

Friday Harbor gets its water from Trout Lake Reservoir, five miles outside of town. The reservoir can hold a maximum of 368 million gallons, but now holds 84 million. That means the town has nine to 12 months of water left in reserve.

"Now we can see the old dam, since the level has dropped to 205 inches below the spillway. We've never seen it this low be-

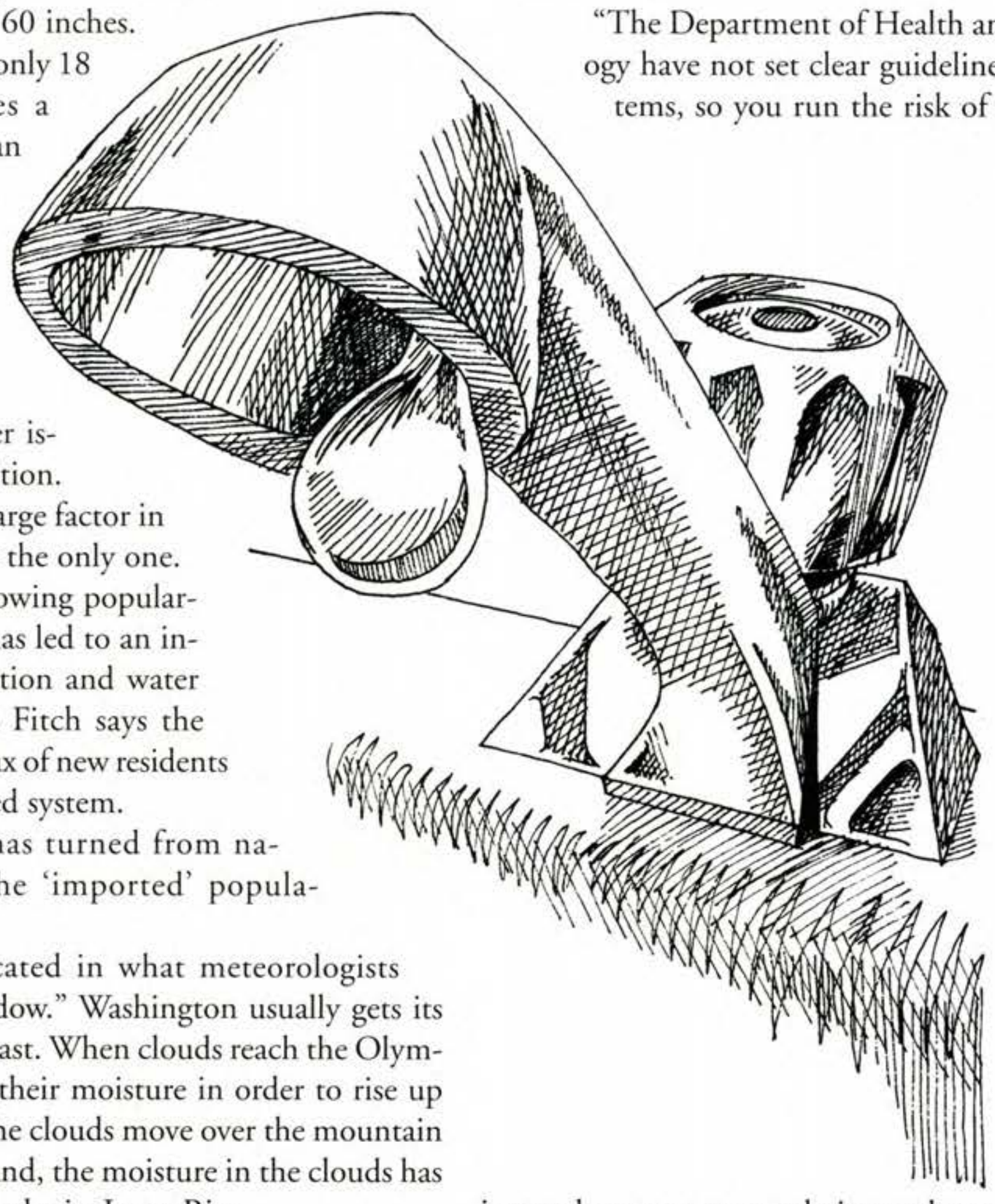
A sign on Friday Harbor's fire station displays the water supply status.

Photo by Tina Jo Koontz

fore," said Town Administrator C. King Fitch. In fact, the lake is at the second-lowest level in history.

The town was incorporated in 1909 partially because of a concern over water issues. "Founders discovered that the wells drilled into springs in town were going to be inadequate ... They knew the ground water reserve was not going to be enough to support the population even back then," Fitch said.

The island is in its fourth major drought since 1929. The current water shortage has lasted more than two years. The average yearly rainfall on San Juan Island is 26.5 inches compared to Seattle's 60 inches. Last year, the island received only 18 inches of rain. This poses a unique problem for San Juan Island because of its limited amount of surface and ground water. Cities on the mainland can buy extra water from surrounding cities. But the islands are isolated, and buying water from other islands is an expensive proposition.



While drought is a large factor in the low water supply, it's not the only one. Since the mid 1970s, the growing popularity of Western Washington has led to an increase in the island's population and water consumption. Even though Fitch says the town planned ahead, the influx of new residents has put a strain on the limited system.

"The population has turned from native or island grown to the 'imported' population," Fitch said.

San Juan Island is located in what meteorologists refer to as a "rain shadow." Washington usually gets its winds from the northeast. When clouds reach the Olympic Mountains, they release their moisture in order to rise up over the range. By the time the clouds move over the mountain range and reach San Juan Island, the moisture in the clouds has dried out, said Seattle meteorologist Larry Rice.

The island's isolation leaves few options for new water supplies. Conservation efforts have gone well during the past two years. In 1994, city totals showed a 25 percent reduction in water consumption. The city's extensive conservation program includes a town-enacted ban on using water for such "frivolous" acts such as washing cars or boats, washing sidewalks, filling swimming pools or fountains and watering lawns. The city provides free water-saving devices such as low-flow shower heads, faucet aerators and toilet leak detection tablets.

Conservation has been the cheapest option to date, but the city is looking at other possibilities for the future. One option is ground water. Wells have been part of the island's water supply for more than 100 years. But the island only contains so much ground water and an increase in wells could potentially exhaust the supply.

Another option is reverse osmosis. This is a process that desalinates ocean water for human consumption. Fitch said that "desalinization equipment has proved reliable in other countries, but the cost is prohibitive." He said that instead of paying $3.29 per 1,000 gallons of water, city residents could expect to pay up to $7.50. The initial investment isn't cheap either, at a cost of almost $1.5 million. And a desalinization system isn't without risk.

"The Department of Health and Department of Ecology have not set clear guidelines on these types of systems, so you run the risk of now putting in place a water system at a substantial expense that may or may not get approval to use," Fitch said.

The last option being given serious consideration by the town council is the importation of water via pipeline. The city hopes to draw water from the Skagit River, something Fitch admits is a long shot. "You've got easements and right-of-ways to negotiate. You've got a substantial water rights issue at the Skagit that needs to be solved," he said.

"Will the state let you get water that's designated for *that* population and bring it somehow to *your* population and meet *your* needs?" Fitch asked. Even if a program such as this were to be approved by the state, the initial cost would be $5 million, not including costs to run pumping equipment to move the water through the line and pay employees to maintain the system.

All of these options will mean higher water-service costs for a water district that already charges the fourth-highest rates in the state. The last three options are expensive for a town with a proposed budget of $1.5 million next year, according to town treasurer Wendy Picinich. The yearly debt on previous water loans is $150,000, or 10 percent of the budget. Ironically, even conservation could raise water rates. Fitch says when people conserve, it means less income for the water district.

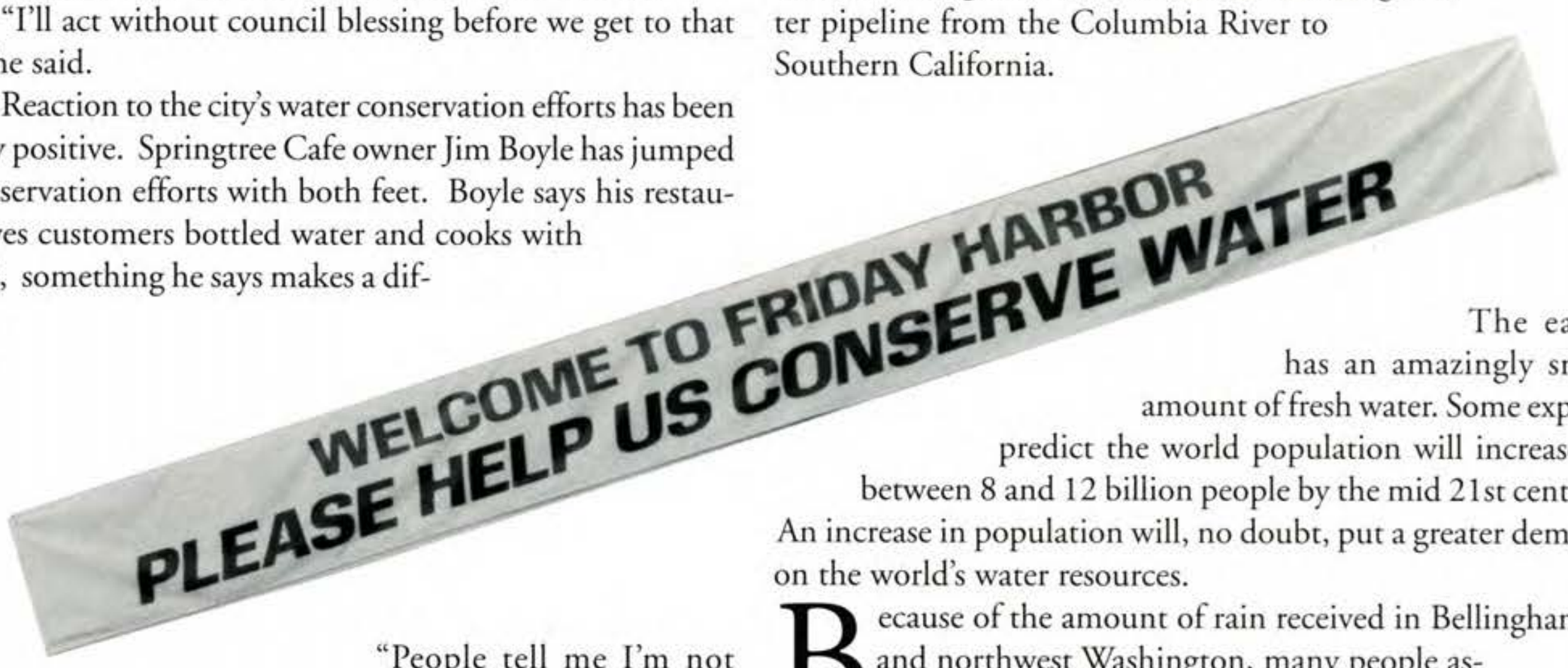
All of these options are under consideration, but no

final decision has yet been made.

"Usually on a city council you get alliances. None have formed on this council yet. There's no telling which way they're going to go on any given subject, especially water," said Friday Harbor Mayor William LaPorte. He added that the council needs to decide soon. A worst-case scenario would involve declaring an emergency, calling the governor and having the National Guard bring in water. LaPorte says it won't come to that.

"I'll act without council blessing before we get to that point," he said.

Reaction to the city's water conservation efforts has been generally positive. Springtree Cafe owner Jim Boyle has jumped into conservation efforts with both feet. Boyle says his restaurant serves customers bottled water and cooks with it as well, something he says makes a difference.



"People tell me I'm not making much of a impact saving a 12-ounce glass of water. But it takes *three* 12-ounce glasses of water to wash *one* 12-ounce glass," Boyle said. Any open but unfinished bottles of water are used for other things such as watering plants. Boyle has also installed low-flow fixtures and had all of the plumbing in his restaurant checked for leaks. His efforts have led to a 40 percent reduction in the amount of local water his restaurant uses.

City residents have also been creative in using their water. Some people use bath water and other waste water for their plants. Many people refrain from flushing their toilets unless absolutely necessary. These efforts have led to the 25 percent reduction in water consumption this year.

Only 12,100 people live on the island, but 25,000 tourists visit annually. Joan Brdar, a desk clerk at the Hotel De Haro in Roche Harbor, said the hotel employees are constantly reminding visitors to conserve.

"Basically, we can't tell customers paying $200 per night not to take showers or long baths, but people have been cooperative," Brdar said.

While the problems of Friday Harbor might seem remote to us, water shortages have affected everyone directly or indirectly. Water shortages in other areas result in higher prices for produce at the grocery store. Some states such as California want to buy water from Washington. One plan proposed by Californian legislators would involve building a water pipeline from the Columbia River to Southern California.

"Basically, we can't tell customers paying $200 per night not to take showers ... but people have been cooperative."

— Joan Brdar

The earth has an amazingly small amount of fresh water. Some experts predict the world population will increase to between 8 and 12 billion people by the mid 21st century. An increase in population will, no doubt, put a greater demand on the world's water resources.

Because of the amount of rain received in Bellingham and northwest Washington, many people assume water conservation isn't an issue. While the water supply in Bellingham is plentiful, water shortages do affect Whatcom County.

County Water Resource Manager Sue Blake says there's a "tremendous amount of uncertainty" about where Whatcom County will get its water in the future.

Blake says the county isn't selling any water-rights permits this year, which means businesses, homes or farms that want to hook up to the county water system can't.

Pollution is also affecting the county's water supply.

"Studies have shown parts of north Whatcom County have high nitrate levels due to fertilizers and pesticides," Blake said.

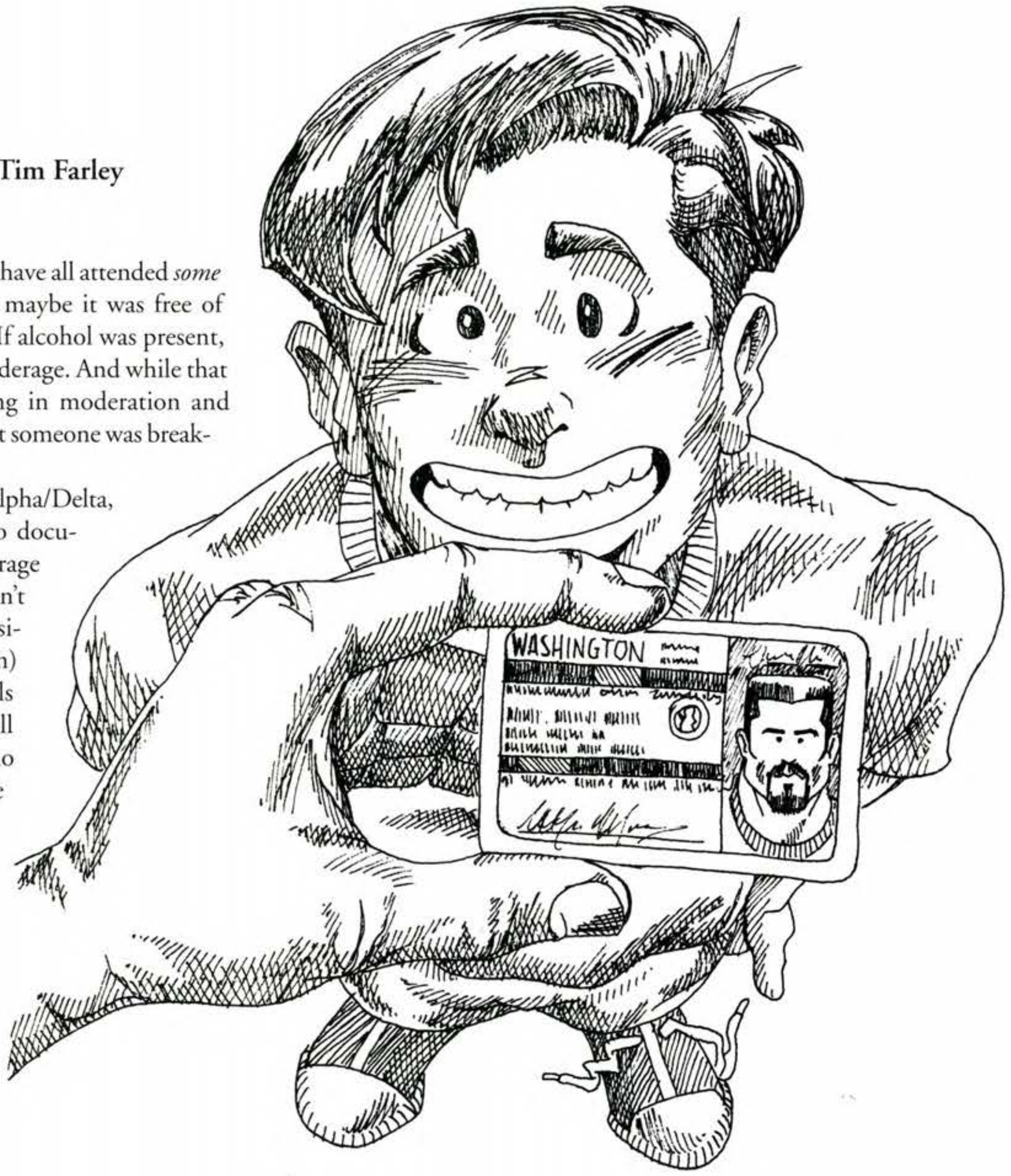
While efforts are being made by the local, state and federal government to protect our waters, toxic materials have polluted many systems.

San Juan Island could be a blueprint of what we will need to do in the future to save water throughout Washington.

Minors and alcohol:

The endless pursuit of an illegal buzz

Story by Angela Cassidy and Tim Farley
Illustrations by Bryan Frank



At some time or another we have all attended *some* kind of social gathering; maybe it was free of alcohol, maybe it wasn't. If alcohol was present, chances are someone there was underage. And while that someone may have been drinking in moderation and causing no trouble whatsoever, that someone was breaking the law.

As a resident advisor for Alpha/Delta, Tara Quackenbush is required to document all incidents involving underage drinking in her halls. She doesn't have the authority to issue hall residents M.I.P. (Minor in Possession) violations, but if the situation calls for it, she or any other R.A. will contact the university police who will be more than happy to issue them. If, however, the resident cooperates, more than likely the incident report will be given to the resident director, who will confer with the student and an M.I.P. is avoided.

"Most of the people are cooperative," Quackenbush said. "And most of the situations are handled without any

contact with the university police."

When an R.A. first approaches a room where underage drinking is taking place, he or she usually asks the resident of the room to come out into the hall. It is then explained that a hall policy is being broken, and all the alcohol in the room must be poured out. The R.A. watches the pouring-out process to ensure it is done completely. The names of everyone present are documented, along with student numbers and what occurred in the room. The document is then given to the resident director, who sets a meeting to discuss the incident with each student.

When asked how parties are discovered, Quackenbush laughed and said it's pretty easy.

"People will walk by you that totally reek of alcohol, and you just kind of go where they go," she said. "If we smell anything, hear anything like bottles clanking or cans ... if there's loud music, we just knock on the door."

According to a 1992 Western Lifestyles Survey of 1,217 students regarding drug and alcohol consumption, 69 percent of underage drinkers reported drinking at least once in the previous month.

The survey also showed, however, that 25 percent of Western students of all ages prefer not to drink and 15 to 20 percent prefer a low to moderate drinking environment, which is classified as fewer than five drinks per night.

Doug Gill, Chief of University Police, speaks to incoming students and their parents at Summerstart about safety policies at the university.

"When I talk at Summerstart I ask (parents) 'Will you be contacted if your kid gets in trouble? How many think they will?' And they raise their hands and I tell them '*Not!*' "

Gill has been at Western for three years. He headed the move to change the annual Red Square Dance to West Fest. He leads 11 full-time officers and about 30 greencoats (students hired as extra security) to help maintain a watchful eye over the campus.

"I recognize the names (of repeats)," Gill said. "I come in early every morning and go over every report. I like to know what's going on. ... Freshmen have required subjects up here," Gill said. "The first one, I think, is Pizza and Beer 101, and they have to graduate from that first."

Gill said the Bellingham Municipal Court sets the fine for M.I.P.s at a general fee of $250. If the recipient is under 18, the parents are contacted.

Amy (her name has been changed at her request), a 19-year-old Western sophomore, has tried to avoid receiving an M.I.P. by using fake identification for the past two years.

She owns two "State Resident" cards she purchased at a passport shop in downtown Seattle for $10 each. Her favorite one to use, however, is her older sister's expired Texas license.

"At clubs that serve alcohol, it's a different social scene," Amy said. "There are different types of people who are more relaxed and more outgoing ... I don't know, I like older people versus people my own age. It's a psychological thing."

Amy said she has used her older sister's ID about 20 times in Tacoma-area grocery stores to purchase alcohol. She would spot a male checker to go through because, as a female, she said, they "never turn her down." She doesn't bother using the resident cards because they are "too fake-looking."

Kurt Nabberfeld, 25, tends bar at the Bellingham Red Robin restaurant. He recalled his experiences with fake IDs.

"It all depends, but I get more fake IDs shown to me once a new quarter (at Western) begins," Nabberfeld said as he flipped through seemingly endless Xeroxed pages of almost four years worth of restaurant-confiscated fake IDs. "We'll see four or five at the beginning before it slows down. We're in a college town — once they come to school, they'll try to weasel anything in."

Nabberfeld said he recently rejected a fake ID from a potential customer trying to pass off an invalid card from Colorado.

"The last one was pretty good, actually," he said. "The picture looked like it had the wrong background to it. I felt the card; it was bumpy over the picture. I pulled back the lamination and there was another guy's picture under it ..."

Red Robin offers its employees a $50 reward for catching a customer trying to use false identification. Nabberfeld said this is just an incentive to conduct good business.

"The way I look at it, some call it a 'bounty hunter fee' — whatever. We stay open. They can't shut us down, and we don't lose thousands of dollars because of it."

Denzel Gifford, a state Liquor Control Board agent, said a minor in possession of a homemade "Washington Resident" card breaks no legal rules.

"It's not illegal for them to produce resident cards. It becomes illegal when they try to use them to purchase alcohol. Misrepresenting your age is what it amounts to, that's what you're charged with. We don't charge you for fake ID."

Gifford said once the board has information about the minor who attempted to use the ID, an agent will conduct an investigation to determine why it was used and by whom. Appropriate charges are then filed.

The penalties for getting caught using fake ID are fairly serious:

If a minor attempts to use someone else's valid identification and is caught doing so, even if the minor took it without the card owner's permission, the penalty is a gross misdemeanor

"If there was a car wreck and the kids were drunk ... if they had a receipt w

that could lead up to a $1,000 fine and a year in prison for both people involved.

If the board confiscates a facsimile of an altered Washington State driver's license, it is turned over to the Department of Licensing and the license is revoked. The board confiscates about 24 fake IDs a year, not including those that restaurants and taverns collect and turn over.

While Amy has managed to avoid any legal trouble, another Western student hasn't been so lucky.

Dean (his name has been changed at his request), a 20-year-old sophomore, received an M.I.P. as a freshman while drinking at an off-campus party. Two officers arrived after a noise complaint and asked to speak with the house owner.

"He (one of the owners) was quite intoxicated," Dean said. "He said we would all have to come out ... so we all walked out, except for the guys (other two owners) in the back rooms who were asleep.

"There were two policemen at first. They started writing M.I.P.s one by one and they got through three of us. And then a third policeman showed up and he took the rest of the people. None of those people got anything. He told them to be careful and not to do it again."

Dean's fine was reduced in half to $125 because he had no previous record. He paid the fine with cash the first of the following month.

"I didn't tell my parents," he said. "No one at home knows."

Minors need a place to get their hands on the precious party supplies and the grocery stores are the outlets they turn to. But the seemingly innocent supermarkets can be held responsible for their illegal sales.

James Adair, a Western senior and checker for a South Seattle Safeway store, said the responsibility is a big one.

"If there was a car wreck and the kids were drunk, it's hard to prove, but if they had a receipt with my checker number and they were all minors, I could be responsible for that," Adair said.

Safeway's policy, set by the state Liquor Control Board for selling alcohol to a minor, is a $2,500 fine for the checker, possible job loss, a stiff monetary fine for the store and the possibility of losing its liquor license. The checker, in extreme cases, may be required to serve jail time.

"We can refuse to sell alcohol to anybody, for any reason," he said. "Now, getting your manager to back you up can be a problem. According to the law, since it's my responsibility, and I'm the one that's gonna pay the penalty for it, I have the right to refuse to sell to anybody I want to."

Adair said Safeway's policy is to card anyone who looks under 30.

"You can't ever be sure, but you get a little bit better at carding," he said. "I've carded people, a lot of people with out-of-state ID and questionable ID, but it was never proven they were fake." Adair still sold the alcohol to the customers.

Barb Holden, also a Western senior, is a checker at Haggen. She said upon receiving invalid ID she gives it back to the customer and says politely she can't make the sale.

"Usually the college students that come in *conveniently* forget their IDs in the car or at home," Holden said. "They're usually pretty embarrassed that they even got caught, so they just leave.

"Some people don't realize how much of a responsibility it is. It's not like we're trying to be mean. We could lose our jobs ... "

Lynne Sweeney, manager of the Lakeway Center State liquor store, said she also deals with customers who claim to forget their identification when they attempt to purchase alcohol.

"We see about one or two fake IDs, at the most, per month," she said. "And if we sense something funny about the ID, we don't sell (the alcohol) to them."

Store policy deems that if a minor is helping to select alcohol for a legal-age person to buy, the sale is turned down without hesitation.

Under advisement from the Liquor Control Board, the Bellingham Police conduct alcohol "stings" each year to try to catch a store selling alcohol to minors.

These are infrequently conducted and are mainly used upon a complaint basis. In September, a hired underage female attempted to buy alcohol from the Lakeway Center liquor store. The clerk on duty refused the sale.

The police do not search for underage drinkers at parties on weekends, Lt. Tom Corzine said. But if they are caught drinking at a loud, uncontrolled party neighbors call to complain about, M.I.P.s are issued about 99 percent of the time.

"For the most part, minors caught drinking who are belligerent or arrogant or seem 'not themselves' are issued an M.I.P. and a monetary penalty. It's not a glamorous or good reference to put in your portfolio.

"We have zero tolerance in regards to minors drinking in public," he said.

As of Nov. 4, 1994, 362 M.I.P.s were issued by the Bellingham police for the year in the city. Corzine said he feels this is a disappointing statistic.

"If that's your highlight, to get drunk at a party after a game, that's pretty sad. There are other highs in our environment and a zillion other things to do," he said.

ith my checker number and they were all minors ... I could be responsible."

— James Adair, Safeway grocery clerk

Story by Noah Walden
Illustration by Bryan Frank

They were here long before the current batch of students came and will be here long after they've grabbed their diplomas and run. Years of wear and overuse have left them in states of shabby disrepair, but at one time the students could identify with them. They are fountains of information and essential to education.

Even so, students talk behind their backs and make jabs at their physical appearance without a care as to what goes on inside them, or their past existences. No, this is not an apologia for the professors, but an inspection of the maligned education buildings of Western.

From the ivy-enshrouded classicism of Old Main to the glass sterility of the new science buildings, Western's buildings are a bizarre cluster of structures created from varying educational needs and university growth combined with changing architectural styles.

Sitting at the base of Sehome Hill, Old Main is a majestic structure. Flanked on either side by additions that stand like sentinels, dark red brick covered in ivy and large doors warmly welcoming prospective students, Old Main could almost be a dormitory at Harvard.

It was designed and built by William B. Davey of Fairhaven in 1896. He had bid $34,350 for the job to build the then Whatcom Normal School. Final costs came to about $40 grand, a little less than it would probably cost to put another bathroom in Old Main today. Certainly the word "dignified" comes to mind when describing the building.

"It's picturesque," said Western sophomore Danielle Robillard. "It's fitting for a college campus." She has a point. When was the last time someone sent his or her grandmother a postcard of Arntzen Hall?

Western's next major non-residential construction was of Mable Zoe Wilson Library in 1928. The original library was a Romanesque structure with high, arched windows and an impressive, tiered south entrance. This side was destroyed in 1962 as part of the early '60s architectural movement that sought, apparently, to make things really confusing and, more often than not, ugly.

Other victims of this period include Miller Hall and Sam Carver Gymnasium.

Miller Hall, built in 1940, was originally a cathedral-like building that housed the education school. In 1968-'69, additions were made to Miller in order to accommodate the psychology department and, more subtly, to ensure that no freshman would ever make it to their first class in Miller Hall on time.

"They should hand out Miller Hall maps," Robillard said, sitting in the belfry of Miller in an office next to the robotic bells.

"There's no windows," said senior Janelle Danielson. "It's like the whole building's trying to breathe through these little slits ... It's bizarre."

Perhaps there is something more sinister to Miller's seemingly random layout. Maybe the psychology majors have been using the structure as a giant rat maze with students as unwitting volunteers. It seems quite possible that its interior shifts drastically when it's empty, changing the maze for each new day.

Even worse was the 1961 commission of Carver Gym, an addition to the old gymnasium. Carver brings nothing more to mind than the idea of a distorted carving from a solid block of aging Velveeta cheese. Its flat, pasty, creamy, off-vomit colors can bring to mind only one other building — Haggard Hall.

"The name says it all," Danielson said with a laugh. "It looks haggard." It's also been called "Hazard Hall" because its designers spent even less time on safety features than they did on the building's exterior beauty.

"Hands down, it's the biggest dump in Bellingham," said junior Mike Rolcik. "It's like third-grade paper maché in a Van Gogh gallery."

Haggard was one of several projects planned by Paul Thiry, architect of some of Western's most ignominious buildings. Thiry was also responsible for the Humanities building — dubbed the building of the "raised eyebrows" because of its hooded windows — and used the same off-hideous brown paint for the bottom exterior as he had for Haggard.

Still, not to be too hard on Thiry; he was a product of his time. Most buildings of the day were constructed with a utilitarian and economic basis in mind.

In between the classic constructions of pre-WWII Western and the rush to build for oncoming boomers, two major buildings were erected at Western — College Hall in 1947 and the Fine Arts Building in 1950.

College Hall, which today houses the journalism and communication departments, was originally the first men's dormitory on campus. Perhaps scraping back a few layers of paint will reveal faded photos of a partially nude Jayne Mansfield or Marilyn Monroe. The Fine Arts Building marked the first movement toward the southwest part of campus.

The late '60s and early '70s showed a radically different architectural design, involving lots of concrete. The consensus was that the best learning environments should be represented as cold, rough cement buildings.

This is seen in the 1969 Fairhaven College. The rest of the state was doing it, too. The economical aspects of making buildings look like prisons made the style especially prominent in other colleges. North Seattle Community College is a monument to the power of concrete.

In fact, Arntzen Hall received an award for "excellence in the use of concrete" from the Washington Aggregate and Concrete Association when it was built in 1974. Perhaps it was those towering monstrosities of pillars that have all the compassion of an ax handle.

"I get depressed just looking at it," Danielson said. "It's just cold."

Standing next to Arntzen like Frankenstein's Monster is the Environmental Studies Building. Designed by Isben Nelson, who also designed Arntzen Hall and Fischer Fountain, ES actually has some interesting architecture on the inside. But the exterior of the 1972 structure is enough to give you a chill on a relatively warm day.

"It looks like a bomb shelter," commented grad student Chris Torson. "That's sort of the mentality of the people inside, too," she continued with a laugh.

Right across from the monoliths is the nondescript Parks Hall. Constructed in 1983, Parks is reported as one of the most space-efficient buildings on campus — unlike our next stop, the Ross Technology Building.

As much as it would like to be a testament to modern engineering, Ross is far from efficient.

Its outdoor second floor serves no purpose except maybe for skateboarding. Second, it features the famous wheelchair ramp leading to a set of stairs. Paul Thiry may have painted the building brown-orange if it were up to him, but even he would have caught the ramp thing.

Coming to the rescue of Western students with an eye for the aesthetic are the new science buildings, with price tags each exceeding $20 million. Not as dismal as the Nelson buildings, not as goofy as the Thiry ones, they shine like diamonds. No doubt Arntzen scowls across the patio at the youthful structures.

Western's history can be traced through its buildings, more so than most colleges. Rather than stay with a uniform style, people in charge have chosen to go with whatever the fashion of the day may be. Either way, Western has an amazingly eclectic building collection, good or bad. Who said there's no diversity at Western?

Students on W

The Faces Behind the Stigma

Story by Shelley Sharp

Western student Erin Riggins sat at the kitchen table sipping French Roast with her ear cocked in the direction of the living room. "Morgaine! I don't want you to make too much of a mess," she called abruptly. She smiled and adjusted her Buddy Holly-style frames on her small nose, shook her straight, shoulder-length brown hair and cleared her throat.

"Yeah," she said, speaking as a single parent attending Western with the financial support of public assistance, "I didn't plan to be on welfare. I worked at the Pike Place Market when I was pregnant and just thought I'd bring my daughter to work with me."

But Riggins realized that she could never make enough money to support her child, and the difficulty of bringing an infant to the open air market would be too much. She decided to make a change and enroll at Seattle Central Community College. "I didn't really have a plan in mind. I just knew that I would need a good job, and going back to school seemed like the right thing to do," Riggins recalled.

Rochelle and Curtis Wambach are also getting through college with the help of public assistance. They are raising three young sons, all of whom they had before applying for Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC).

"I was working as a file clerk and Curtis was making baby furniture, and we both realized that in order to live and have decent jobs we would need to go back to school ... It was a big step," Rochelle chuckled, black braids swinging around her dark eyes.

The Wambachs have found that being married and on welfare is especially difficult. "They (welfare workers) give

"It's really too bad that most people do
would rather see me working and sta

Welfare

Photo by Cassandra Burdsal

n't place a value on parenting ... some
rving, not doing what I'm doing ..."

— Erin Riggins

couples a very hard time ... They assume that one of you can be around to take care of the kids, but we're busy all the time — we have to do a lot of tag-team parenting," said Rochelle.

The Wambach's and Riggins' cases are not isolated. Politically, welfare reform is a hot topic. It's part of the Clinton 'Opportunities and Responsibilities' campaign dubbed *The Work and Responsibility Act of 1994*.

This act and conservative, anti-welfare sentiment have perpetuated existing conceptions about welfare and its recipients that are either false or misleading; misconceptions that depict the receivers of public assistance as lazy, unwilling to work and having babies to make more money. As a result, parents and their children, like Riggins and Morgaine and the Wambachs and their sons, are often the targets of ridicule.

Western junior Paul Bishop voiced his opinion. "I know that there are homeless people, especially children, out there who need to eat, but why should I pay for someone to have kids and stay home?"

Bishop's sentiment is a popular one — echoed by politicians like Dan Quayle and Newt Gingrich. Both have stated in television interviews that women are making money on welfare. But statistics concerning welfare and its recipients tell a different story.

"I receive $440 a month to raise my daughter," Riggins said forcefully. "This goes completely toward my rent, which is $425 a month." This amount is the standard award granted to families with one child and only constitutes 47 percent of the Standard of Need (the amount needed to survive) as defined by Washington state. Therefore, families living solely on AFDC awards are far from well off. They are, in fact, living 50 percent below poverty level.

Western students, and all students in higher education who receive AFDC, are at an advantage, however. Effective July 1, 1993, the Higher Education Act amendment made significant changes in the ways in which student financial aid (grants, federal loans and scholarships) works with the welfare system (AFDC, Refugee Assistance and Food Stamps). This means that students who receive benefits from DSHS/Department of Social and Health Services can receive student financial aid without it affecting their public assistance benefits.

Both the Wambachs and the Riggins currently receive student financial aid and AFDC.

"What this is allowing me to do," said Riggins, "is to go to school, study and raise my daughter." As an afterthought she continued, "It's really too bad that most people don't place a value on parenting ... some would rather see me working and starving, not doing what I'm doing — I think my father is totally ashamed ..."

Riggins' comments were interrupted by a vivacious rush of orange-red hair and waving arms as 5-year-old Morgaine stormed into the room. "Mom! I have to go potty," she yelled. "Well then, I suggest you go," Riggins said, rolling her eyes.

She glanced up. "Where was I? Oh yeah — welfare is not an easy thing to be on. It's not like I enjoy having a hard time finding a place to live or explaining myself to agencies that want income verification."

Since moving to Bellingham from Seattle last September, Riggins and her daughter have had to move twice. They were forced to leave their first apartment after the landlord told them, a week after they moved in, that he had sold the building and it was going to be torn down.

"He knew in advance that the building was going to be leveled," Riggins fumed, "but he knew I was on welfare and would not be able to fight him financially or have the time to do it while in school — he didn't even stop to think that I have a child to raise."

Because Riggins had received student financial aid in addition to an AFDC grant, she was able to take on the financial burden of moving twice.

"If I wasn't in school and receiving financial aid too, I wouldn't have a phone or be able to pay for my heat," she explained. "I have friends who have been discriminated against from renting apartments because they were on welfare ... you constantly have to try to convince landlords that you'll pay them, even if you have a good rental history." Negative bias toward families on welfare is very real.

"When I go to the grocery store, I avoid eye contact," Riggins confessed. "When you use food coupons, sometimes clerks or other people in line can be rude or unfriendly."

Rochelle Wambach has had similar experiences. She and her mother were in a convenience store in Chicago buying soda when a clerk tried to turn them away.

"The man told my mother, who is not on welfare, that he didn't accept food stamps," she said, narrowing her eyes. "He assumed that because she was a black woman, she had to be on welfare, but my mother whipped out her wallet, showed him at least seven credit cards, and paid in cash!"

Wambach sees welfare myths as being directly linked to race. "When people think of welfare, they immediately picture a big, black woman driving a Cadillac with a load of kids," she said. "They don't think of me, running around campus with a loaded-down backpack in the rain."

Cindy Shealy, education coordinator for the Bellingham Opportunity Council, facilitates and speaks at area forums that attempt to raise awareness and dispel the myths about the individuals who receive welfare. In a November presentation at Western, *Breaking the Myths: Women on Welfare Speak Out*, Shealy lectured that the typical welfare recipient is a child, and over 50 percent of the families receiving AFDC only have one child. Shealy stressed that parents cannot afford to accept low-wage or part-time jobs, which have no medical benefits. If they did, the costs of child care, health insurance, rent and food would be astronomical, leaving many children homeless.

In her office at 314 E. Holly St., Shealy elaborated further. "My goal is to put a human face on these women and their families," stated Shealy. "Most peoples' ideas about welfare are based on misunderstanding and fear. Individuals who are born into poverty find it very hard to climb out ... most us have more opportunities than they do but just don't realize it."

Graphic by Ryan McMenamin Data compiled by the Fair Budget Action Campaign

The families that Shealy works with are mostly single mothers with two or three children.

"Most of the women I am working with have come from abusive, alcoholic situations," said Shealy. "They are all white, and they are either working, going to college or working at home to provide stable lives for their children. These women don't want to be on assistance, but they need help to get ahead."

Shealy's clients are average welfare recipients according to statistics compiled by DSHS Office of Research and Data Analysis. Their findings show that while people of color are disproportionately poor, the majority (three-fourths) of public assistance recipients are Caucasian. In addition, 60 percent of the women applying for AFDC report leaving abusive homes.

"There is such a big push for 'family values' and families staying together," Shealy said, "but in most cases, this would be worse for the child's welfare than being in a single-parent household living on public assistance."

But the stigmas attached to the recipients of public assistance go beyond just viewing them as lazy and unwilling to

work; they question the moral characters of these struggling families.

In the October 1994 newsletter published by the Welfare Rights Organizing Coalition, Policy Committee Chair Alicia Straub wrote, "The current welfare system is at odds with the core values Americans share: work, family, opportunity and responsibility. We are led to believe that low-income, single parents don't share these values and are irresponsible."

Western's Director of Student Financial Aid Kathy Sahlhoff has found that welfare recipients at Western are far from irresponsible.

"We find (at Western) that the people who are on AFDC are juggling an incredible amount ... they seem to do just fine and handle their academics incredibly well."

"I know that issues are being discussed on the national level between the current administration and the Republicans about terminating people after two years, but I don't know how realistic it is," said Sahlhoff.

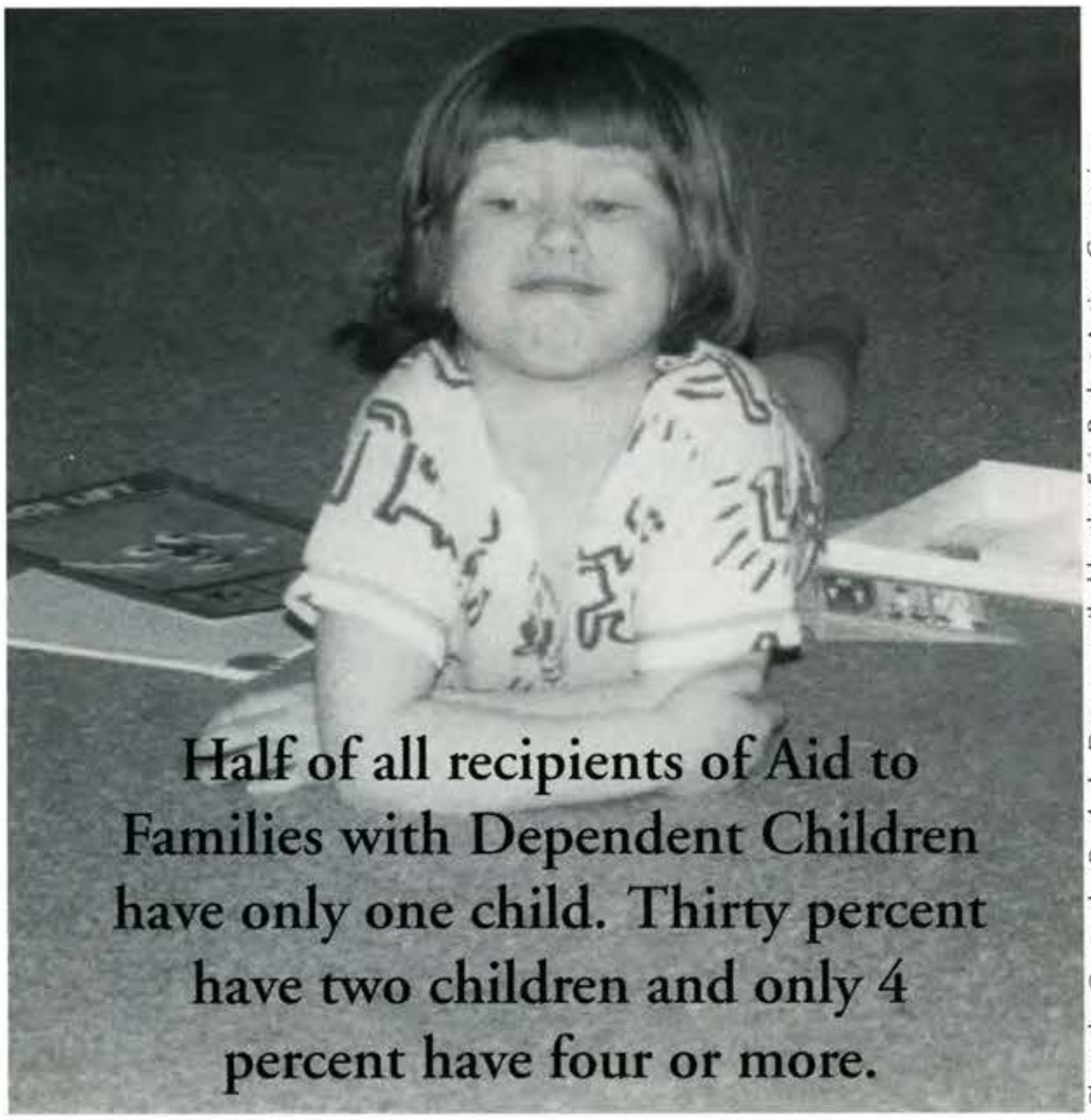


Photo by Cassandra Burdsal Data compiled by the Fair Budget Action Campaign

The U.S. government's position on welfare reform is greatly contradicted by its own statistics. According to data from the Washington State Institute for Public Policy, 41 percent of the public assistance population work in part time employment, with the average welfare recipient receiving aid for less than two years. Also, its findings conclude that welfare fraud occurs in fewer than 3 percent of cases, and it is estimated that this statistic as high.

In Washington, the increase of families receiving public assistance is four times greater in rural areas than in the urban Puget Sound region, reflecting the loss of jobs in Washington's rural counties.

Some women living in cities choose to stay home with their children because they see mothering as a valuable position, even a profession. Shealy works with a small number of women who are staying home.

"I think mothers, and single parents in general, are in a no-win situation," suggested Shealy. "They are condemned if they work and are forced to put their children in child care, and they are condemned, and seen as abusing the system, if they stay home to raise their kids. Issues about the absent parent are rarely discussed; it's always 'those lazy welfare mothers,'" she stated shortly.

Riggins understands why single parents make that choice. "Why, instead of putting the emphasis on getting a job, can't we put a greater emphasis on raising children?" she wondered out loud, shaking her head. "It's hard enough raising your child without being attacked."

Shealy says the most positive way to help families on welfare is to not push them back into abusive households or work in minimum wage jobs, but to help them through by educating the general public.

"We (Americans) don't look at prevention. We want to see them working at McDonalds for $5 an hour," she commented. "Get the education out there, that's the big issue."

Shealy suggests that instead of reforming welfare recipients, we need to reform the ways in which welfare is perceived by the general population, and she is striving to do so.

Shealy currently works at the Opportunity Council and VISTA, which is part of the Fair Action Campaign, traveling between Bellingham and Seattle to raise awareness and work with children of low-income families. In the spring, she is moving to Mississippi, where welfare benefits are among the lowest in the country, to work in a similar position.

The Riggins and Wambach families, like most welfare recipients, have high aspirations for the future, none of which include public assistance. Riggins is currently a junior at Western, working on a bachelor's degree in history while attending the School of Education. Wambach and her husband will graduate from Western with degrees in history and biology. They plan to be off welfare in two or three years.

"I want to teach in a rural area and be involved in more innovative teaching methods," sighed Riggins when thinking about her future. "Then I would like to open my own school somewhere in Washington ... but wherever I end up, my daughter will be right by my side."

JOBLESS IN SEATTLE

After being hastily ousted from *The Seattle Times*, Brian Basset epitomizes his cartoon creation 'Adam'

Story by Haidee Jezek
Illustrations courtesy of Brian Basset

Brian Basset is getting a lot of attention these days.

Not only is he well-known as the creator of the nationally syndicated comic strip "Adam," which is about a house husband who stays home with the kids while his wife works, Basset has also been the editorial cartoonist for *The Seattle Times* for the last 16 years — until recently.

According to Basset and The Pacific Northwest Newspaper Guild the *Times* told him they were eliminating his position as editorial cartoonist. He was reportedly given 15 minutes to leave the building with his accumulated personal possessions.

Photo by Ryan McMenamin

Brian Basset signs a comic at a reception held in support of him at the Pacific Northwest Newspaper Guild building.

In response to Basset's termination, a Brian Basset support rally was held in the newspaper guild office. Noisy conversation carried all the way to the elevator and the unanticipated, cocktail-party atmosphere grew into a crowded show of appreciation on Basset's behalf.

Upon entry, a poster sketch of President Clinton, looking bewildered, commanded attention. "Unfinished Business: Bring Back Brian!" it read. Canary-yellow balloons tied in groups throughout the office complemented Basset's black-and-white political cartoons and "Adam" comics hung around the office. Signed, original comics were displayed for exhibition and sale.

Basset greeted guests and explained the situation with his former employer and termination by the *Times* editorial director, Mindy Cameron.

"I think what caught me so off-guard was the timing. I wondered, 'How could she do it on the eve of an election?'" Basset said, in a tight, frustrated tone. "She said I was doing substandard work. Basically, I had an editor who wanted me out of there."

Basset noted he kept a paper trail regarding poor work performance accumulated over the past year and a half. "They (the *Times*) said laying me off was for economic reasons. But there's a reason why it doesn't make sense. Mindy was down-grading me, trying to terminate me on performance grounds," he said.

The same day Basset left, Eric Nalder, investigative reporter for the *Times*, circulated a petition around *The Seattle Times* news building to reinstate Basset as editorial cartoonist.

"I became aware since mid-August that Mindy was expressing termination," Nalder said. He noted that Cameron and Jim Vesely, the associate editorial director,

judged Basset's work exactly opposite.

"One would like a cartoon and the other would hate it. Instead of trying to fire him, they decided to eliminate the position. It certainly doesn't make any sense to me. A lot of us were overwhelmed that they decided to do it. I decided to start a petition," Nalder said.

The petition, addressed to Frank Blethen, publisher of the *Times*, and Cameron, noted it was apparent that Brian was being fired not for economic reasons, but because they didn't like his work.

"By the next day, I had 170 (staff) signatures. There was a remarkable unanimity. You have to understand, it's very unusual for journalists to sign these things. It is ludicrous to say his cartoons aren't up to par," explained Nalder, whose piercing eyes made him look like a stereotypical find-all, gumshoe reporter.

The syndicated comic strip "Adam," created in 1984, is about a stay-at-home dad. Since his dismissal from the Seattle Times, Basset says he has literally become the comic strip character

Cameron explained calmly that eliminating Basset's position was purely economical.

"We wanted to see what we could do with the money. There is a clause in (Basset's) contract that states we won't hire another political cartoonist for at least another year. Right now we use syndicated cartoons," explained Cameron.

Regarding personal differences between herself and Basset, Cameron stated that the issue is a personnel matter which she would not discuss.

"As far as the memos go, I'm going to treat those confidentially. He knew before Tuesday (October 18). He caught me by surprise. He cleared out most of his office," Cameron said.

Cameron saw the petition situation differently. She noted that Basset and Nalder circulated the petition together, disrupting the working environment. She said she asked Basset how long it would take him to gather his belongings. After Basset told her a couple of hours, Cameron told him, "Less time would be wiser."

While Cameron would not speculate on what the future holds for Basset and the *Times*, she noted, "We hope to have a local editorial cartoonist next year."

Basset added that he offered to resign, but a settlement could not be reached. Now, the paper's management team and the newspaper guild are waiting for arbitration, which could take six to nine months.

According to Basset, four things could happen: Basset and the guild could win or lose arbitration. Basset could freelance for the *Times*. The final option would be a financial settlement between Basset and the paper.

The week following the termination, Basset sat behind a slanted desk in his home-studio nestled in the woods of Issaquah, cartooning. His two-story, celery-green and pewter country home stands behind majestic fir trees. The front door teases solicitors with barely see-through French-lace curtains. A ceramic piglet with a plastic duck bill sits next to the entry way.

Upstairs, Basset's studio is the first room to the left, brightly lit by an over-head lamp with a loose spring and by a replica of the "leg" lamp in the movie "A Christmas Story."

Several knick-knacks line his shelves mixed with inked comic strips ready to be sent out. A small window reveals tall, wispy birch trees shadowed by the night setting in. Slightly hunched for a close-up look, he thickens the border to his freshly penciled "Adam" comic with one-chance-only black ink.

"Part of me wants to be back at the *Times*," admitted Brian, painting in Adam's nose and eyes with black ink. He dipped his fine-stranded brush into a cup the shape of Popeye's head, pipe and all.

"But doing cartoons at home, I know I could get more comics done, take care of the kids and do some more house work. The other part of me knows going back to the paper would be awful," said Basset, coloring in Adam's hair.

While Basset waits for the outcome, he is devoting even more time to his comic strip and family.

"I literally am Adam right now. My wife works and I stay home with the kids and work in my studio," he said, brushing in the finishing touches of a curious-looking Nick — Adam's

cartoon son. The comic is now ready for send-off.

Basset admits his wife and their two sons, 6 and 8, often provide him with scenarios that wind up in his comic strips.

"My family will be sitting at the dinner table," he said. "Then my 6-year-old will do something and run off — I have to write the idea down in gravy so I don't forget it."

A good example of these real-life scenarios is something that happened to him six years ago.

At home in Seattle, Basset was showing his then 6-month-old son a rattle, which was normally stuck on his high-chair. Basset suctioned it onto his forehead. He leaned toward his baby son on hands and knees and flung his head from side to side, sounding off a shaking, rattling noise.

He knew well enough that the rattle would leave a mark if it was simply plucked away. Basset planned to gently slide the rattle off. Unexpectedly, his 2-year-old son raced from behind, ripping the rattle off his father's forehead.

Voila! A hickey was born!

Basset remembers boarding a plane heading for Ohio shortly after the incident. His 6'2" hockey player's frame usually saved him from stares when he stood erect. But when he leaned over to put his luggage under the seat, all eyes were fixed on his high forehead. And they weren't looking at the receding crop of flaming-red hair that is fascinating in itself. It didn't matter how much make-up his wife plastered on his forehead to cover up the hickey — it still shone like a coal miner's light.

Basset later penned his hickey into work for "Adam."

"That hickey was a great idea for the comic strip," Basset said, relaxed on his sofa, stroking the black-as-night kitten with snowy-white paws curled in his lap. "It drew a lot of attention for about 10 days," he said.

Basset refers to his characters as if they were real. His characters aren't just a drawn father with an oversized nose named Adam, or kids with flailing arms wanting dad to take them to the bathroom all the time — they are an extended part of his family.

Basset doesn't steal all of his ideas from his family, however. Some come from neighbors and friends.

A silver mini-van was parked in Basset's driveway. Late last year, Adam was attending a mini-van denial support group.

"Some of our male friends with families had a hard time buying mini-vans. They bought a mini station wagon or a sedan, not realizing they can't pack all the kids in there until it's too late. So I made that into a comic," Basset said.

In fact, his character, "Adam," comes from the first comic strip he drew, about the perils of a typical Northwest gardener.

"The beginning Adam comic strip was based on a small potatoes gardener. You know, the typical Northwest gardener — at odds with nature," Basset said, laughing and still stroking the cat. "I had him dealing with all the creatures in the dirt. They had their own personalities. Some of them had names."

Basset was pleased with his gardener's traumas, but his syndicate was "very leery about trying to market slimy slugs and bugs." That's when he thought of Adam.

"When I realized it wasn't going to fly, I still kept him in the back of my head. This character would putz around and cook, a really easy-going guy. I gave Adam that same personality," Basset explained.

His character's transition from hopeless gardener to stay-at-home dad came around the time the movie, "Mr. Mom," was in theaters, in 1983.

"I didn't see the movie for about two years after it came out. I didn't want to contaminate my strip," he admitted.

Basset explained he didn't want to see the movie because he was just beginning his comic strip and wasn't sure of himself, even though he was a political cartoonist for 21 years and grew up in a cartoonist family.

Basset got much of his influence from his father, who is himself a retired political cartoonist. His father began as a theatrical and sports cartoonist in the 1940s and moved on to politics in the late '60s.

"I don't know at what point I became interested," recalled Basset, leaning back with his arms crossed. "I grew up in McLean, Virginia. Everyone had military or government parents. It was fun having him come to school for show-and-tell. My father always seemed to like what he was doing.

"I loved going to his studio on the weekends. I would look over his shoulders for hours. When I showed an interest,

he was very positive and critiqued my work. By 5th or 6th grade, I was heads above all in art. Early on, I knew I could cartoon," he said.

He entered Ohio State University in 1975 and cartooned for *The Lantern*, the largest college paper in the nation, which circulated 30,000 papers daily. "I took a variety of classes, especially political science and art. I gobbled up as many classes as I could to lay groundwork."

Overtaken three years later by wanderlust, Basset hitchhiked, and "be-bopped around until I hit Seattle. I felt like I could work for a major paper. Somehow I finagled a job. I made some sketches and sent them to the *Times* , basically saying, 'See what you can have at the *Times*?'" An editor put Basset to work on a six-month trial basis, then kept him.

"I had no plan of action. Thinking I could do it just like that was a fallacy. In the beginning years, I didn't think it through as much. I was so caught up in getting the comic strip out (for press time) ... I could have done a little more homework. It was a very humbling experience in terms of how long it took me to put out a good comic strip," Basset said.

Since he grew up in a political cartoonist's household, Basset found writing comic strips a challenge.

"Comic strips were distant and curious to me. It was a strange degree of voyeurism. I wanted to know what that world was all about," he said.

"A comic strip is different than political cartoons. You have things to build: characters, a story line ... you make up a whole world. Those are things I didn't even think about before. In many ways it is more difficult," he said.

Two elements Basset discovered were paramount in the strip: writing and children.

"Drawing is almost secondary to writing. It's sad but true," said Basset. "There was something about the comic strip that wasn't working. I didn't have a clue. Then one day I went into my studio, looked at all my strips and decided, this isn't funny. The problem was, I had no kids. I couldn't even touch on the subtleties," Basset explained.

After having two children, he found it easier to be realistic in his strip.

"Because it's a family strip, I keep things believable. My sons got into baseball card collecting. So in the comic strip (the kids) end up spending every penny on cards. They're not going to go on vacation and get kidnapped by a bunch of terrorists. It has to be believable, closer to home," Basset explained, pointing out that terrorists quite often pop up in political cartoons.

While suction cup toys and an endless collection of baseball cards may not be what the average father takes care of daily, Adam has to put those things first as he raises his children and his wife works. While this concept was novel in the '80s, Basset noted that he changes Adam to match the present day.

"It used to be one parent worked and one stayed home. Now, often-times, both parents work. If a man is home, he's usually working at home. So for the last two years, Adam has been trying to write a book. And he's still on the first page," said Basset.

In an phone interview with Basset, the cartoonist reiterated that working at home not only gives him more time to develop his strip, it also allows for more anecdotes in his comics. His favorite, he says, is something he did but would never "own up to doing," until now.

"In a Sunday strip a few years back, Adam holds the TV remote against his head, and the signal bounces off his forehead and changes the channel," Basset confided, through an incredible amount of static coming over the phone line. "A co-worker said, 'Please tell me you stumbled across this by accident.' But it really happened to me. I was aiming to change the channel, and it accidentally bounced off the wall. So then I tried it with my head. It works," he said.

Suddenly, the lights at Basset's house went out. The harsh weather outside caused a power surge.

"I have to go check on my kids — they're downstairs," Basset said.

He went to the studio doorway and yelled: "Do you guys have flashlights?"

Immediately two high-pitched, excited voices yelled back.

"Yeeeeeesssssss!!!"

Maybe this scene could find its way into a future strip.

As for his job at the *Times*, only time will tell.

Old Chuckanut: A voyage to tempt the senses 'off the beaten path.'

Story by Nicole Simpson
Photos by Cassandra Burdsal

Within a stone's throw of campus lies a realm where screeching alarm clocks, coma-inducing lectures and intolerably long espresso lines are pure fiction. Abandon the mind-numbing winter doldrums and venture to a land where the sights and sounds of a hurried civilization fade into emerald ravines, trickling waterfalls and stands of towering evergreens.

When the realities of higher education become too fierce, forget the extra-strength Tylenol and potentially violent impulses of revenge. Leave behind the stagnant classroom air and the suffocating crowds. For an adventure to soothe the five senses, journey no farther than your own backyard.

"Though the view from my door was still more contracted, I did not feel crowded or confined in the least," wrote author and philosopher Henry David Thoreau of the simple beauty surrounding a tiny pond near his house. "There was pasture enough for my imagination."

Resembling the wizard's path through Oz, Chuckanut Drive coils along the water's edge from old Fairhaven to Burlington, twisting through 25 miles of flourishing natural beauty. Panoramic glimpses of the San Juan Islands, coupled with a collage of hideaway nooks and perches inspired Evening and *Sunset* magazines to name Chuckanut one of "the most beautiful drives in the Northwest."

Chuckanut Drive is also a featured location in a book filled with descriptions of "The Best Places to Kiss in the Northwest." Rating each location on a scale of one to four kisses, the authors awarded this "landmark coastal drive" with the blue-ribbon prize of "four kisses," calling Chuckanut's splendor and ambiance "sublime."

The publicized honors have transformed old Chuckanut into a concrete magnetic force, drawing tourists from far and wide to its tree-lined borders. But to experience the revitalizing spirit of the Chuckanut area, the curious must reach beyond the pavement's edge. Whether it be along the gentle curves of the Interurban trail, up the steep and mysterious incline to the bat caves or amidst a garden full of playful sculptures, opportunities for serenity await.

"Everywhere around campus there are so many hordes of people," sighed Jessica Johnson, a junior feeling the constraints and pressures of higher education. The English major sat on a cold gray bench with her loafer-clad feet resting on a mound of text books. She began to vocalize images of a stress-free vacation as she vigorously rubbed her palms together for warmth.

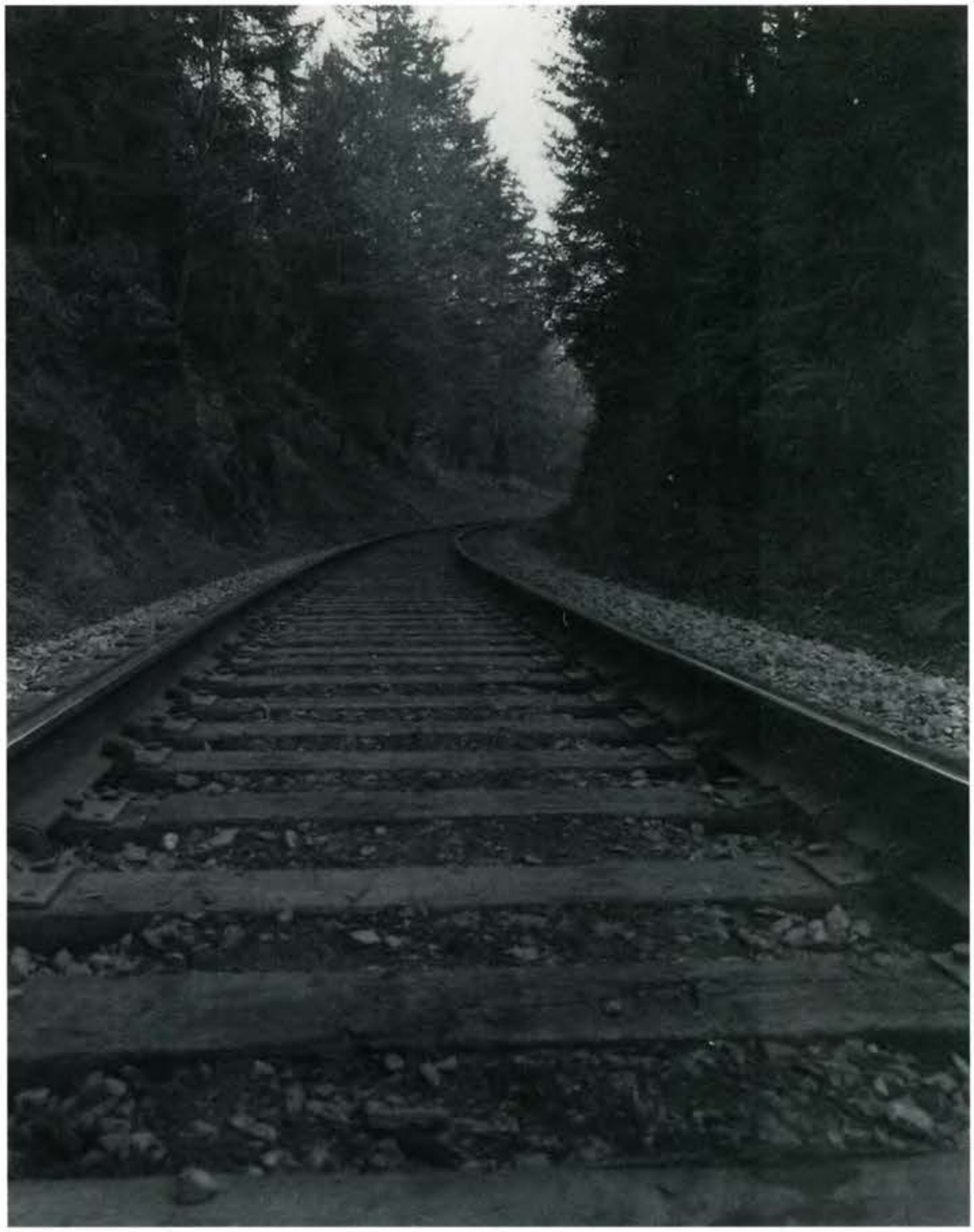
"But when you get to the trails you're isolated," Johnson said of the paths leading off Chuckanut Drive. "It's just a great time to think."

In days of old, Chuckanut Drive was a subtropical paradise ruled by roaming dinosaurs. The only visible traces left to mark their presence are skeletal impressions in the stones along the now-traveled pathway. Since the turn of the century, the commotion and bustle of industry along old Highway 99 have all but disappeared, as well. Once occupied by logging operations and salmon canneries, the Chuckanut area also had its share of moonshining and smuggling operations during Prohibition. In its calmest era yet, old Chuckanut is now a haven for hikers, walkers and bikers in search of a revitalizing get-away.

"Getting out there and hiking clears your mind from all the stresses of studying and everyday life," said junior Marcy

Niland, a newcomer to Western who has discovered a healing quality in the trails off Chuckanut Drive. "It's a break from reality. And when your mind is clear like that, you can be focused again."

In preparation for a romp into the damp Chuckanut wilderness, Niland slips on some muddied hiking boots, a corduroy hat and a pair of woolen mittens. Allowing herself only an hour of relief from the demands of academia, the elementary education major has opted for a casual stroll down the Interurban trail, a pathway recently deemed "The Best Place to Bike" in Whatcom County, according to an opinion survey done by The Bellingham Herald.



Curving and rolling over wooden-planked bridges and metallic-gray streams, the Interurban trail meanders from Old Fairhaven Parkway to Larrabee State Park. The two-mile expanse is rimmed with ferns and moss-blanketed forest, attracting the brightly-colored whir of walkers, joggers and bikers year-round.

"Practice random acts of kindness and senseless acts of beauty," advises the bumper sticker on an old Volkswagen bus parked near the sign for Arroya Park, the point south of old Fairhaven where the Interurban crosses Chuckanut Drive. Descending from this cement reference point, the curious follow a narrow path through a plush ravine, across a rushing silver creek and up the side of an emerald hill leading, eventually, into Larrabee State Park. Along the trail are tiny beaches and soft, fallen timber, where the hiker can pause to watch the crystalline water cascade over many levels of rocks and sand.

"The sounds of that stream while you walk through the trees ... it's just so calming," Niland said, closing her eyes to visualize the image. "School seems so far off."

As the trail continues into the scenic state park, there are mossy concrete look-outs, as well as more downed trees, where the adventurer can sit. One can't help but sigh, as each exhaled breath forms clouds in the untainted winter air.

"If you like something leisurely and tranquil, walk along the Interurban trail," Niland advised. "Really, you can make it what you want. You can just walk, or you can make it more challenging if you take your bike. But, if you want more of a challenging hike, go up to the bat caves."

Cushioned by a thick blanket of scarlet and rust-colored maple leaves, the three-mile trail leading from Chuckanut Drive to the infamous bat caves seems a route from safe into sinister. However, the spooky aura of the hiker's destination is overshadowed by a series of glimpses through vein-like tree branches of the natural wonders below, including sights of Bellingham and Chuckanut Bay.

"All along the trail are places where you can see forever," Johnson recalled, having taken time out of dorm life to explore the length of the winding two-mile ascent. "The cliffs, the water, the fog, the mountains ... it's all so gorgeous."

The hike to the bat caves begins at a pull-off on Chuckanut Drive between the Oyster Creek Inn and the Oyster Bar. After crossing a private road a short way up, the trail

begins its steep ascent through the moist, clean air to the mysterious caverns.

"The air is so fresh, you can feel it when you breathe in," Johnson said, recalling her recent hike up the trail. "In Seattle, the air is just heavier ... you can smell the smoke and the cars. But on our hike, there was just the trees — not a car for miles."

On brisk January mornings the trail seems to take bundled-up hikers to points above the clouds. While some climb only to reach the top, others stop along the way to take in the changing scenery.

"It's a stress-reliever," stated Carrie Richards, an environmental studies major who finds the bat cave trail an exhilarating break from the weight of text books. "It's a sense of accomplishment getting to the top of the trail. It's something people don't have to tell you to do, you just do it on your own."

Should hours of walking or biking the damp, chilly trails inspire a thirst for the warmth of espresso or a desire to own artistic renderings of the Chuckanut area, stop by the Chuckanut Bay Gallery and chat a bit with owners Carol and Don Salisbury, Western graduates who would be happy to pair your interest in art with a steaming vanilla latté.

The only sound reverberating through the air is the faint gurgle of small stone fountains, as the water drips into tiny pebble-filled ponds. Anxious little fish splash about beneath pastoral images of mountains, pastures and barns, and the sustained echo of windchimes can be detected above it all. It's difficult to believe that you're indoors.

"It was originally an old gas station and grocery store when the highway used to go through here," Carol said of their gallery perched between the road and a backdrop of evergreens. "And now it's really wonderful to be a part of a scenic drive. It's nice to be a place where people can come to have a break. People like to have a destination when they drive."

The small studio/gallery is filled with the work of local artists. Don, a sculptor with an art degree from Western, is among the artists displaying their wares. Other items include paintings, serigraphs, beaded and sterling jewelry and pottery.

"Artists like to do Chuckanut Drive," Carol said, pointing to a colorful serigraph adorning the wall behind her. "It's so scenic. It's Washington's Big Sur ... that's the way I see it. It has so many beautiful vistas."

The Salisburys are thrilled with their eight-year stay as a business along old Chuckanut. Since it opened, the studio/gallery has expanded to include a garden shop and a picturesque sculpture garden abounding in natural and artistic beauty.

"(The sculpture garden) was just a patch of grass last year," Carol said, looking through the panes of glass at a small haven of statues and bird houses. "Now people like to wander and drink coffee ... that's why we have the bench set out there beneath the tree — so people can sit and relax."

Giant rusted-metal images of frolicking bears, brightly-colored bird baths and glowing green lanterns give visitors the sensation of wandering through a storybook world. The echo of polished steel wind chimes combined with the sound of a gurgling creek set the tone for a relaxing visit.

As this literary journey ends, so can begin a Chuckanut adventure of your own.

In discovering the soothing, peaceful qualities of the out-of-doors, you may find that spending even an hour of the day along the recesses of Chuckanut Drive may just realign your senses.

"We must learn to reawaken and keep ourselves awake," Thoreau wrote of his experiences with nature. " ... To affect the quality of the day, that is the highest of arts."

Reznor's 'empire of

Nearly three decades of pain, suffering and ang
Trent Reznor and his band Nine Inch Nails to m

Story by Kevin Perron

While Trent Reznor seems to have cornered the market on pain, anger and sado-masochistic sexual imagery, Nine Inch Nails is now associated with a less familiar term — success.

After five years filled with legal battles, censored videos and a self-imposed, hectic touring schedule, the band has finally reached full-scale stardom.

Reznor and Nine Inch Nails first came to public attention in 1989 with the debut album "Pretty Hate Machine." Since then, Nine Inch Nails has been catapulted into being recognized as one of the most respected names in music. The catchy anthem "Head Like a Hole," brought the underground "Industrial" scene to the forefront of popular music.

Reznor's popularity wasn't charted or in any way expected, he says. The executives at his label, TVT, didn't predict the album to sell more than 20,000 copies. Much to their surprise, it went platinum and established Nine Inch Nails as a household name.

"I wouldn't have expected anything like this to happen this early in my career — not for at least three or four albums," the 29-year-old Reznor says of his increasing success.

As if a premonition to the problems to come with his record label, the chorus of "Head Like a Hole" screamed an angry message that was loud and clear to the executives — *"I'd rather die than give you control."*

Reznor felt the label was constricting his creative talents and was trying to force the band down a more commercial path. He insists that arguments over videos, singles and a lack of tour support led him to seek a way out of his contract.

"I felt trapped — stuck in a really fucked-up situation," Reznor recollects. "This was every musician's worst nightmare — the music industry rearing its big ugly head — and I was suddenly forced to realize that the whole business isn't about art or creativity at all. It's all about exploitation, what they can do to market the product, sell the most records and manipulate the audience."

Another monumental blow leading to the split was when TVT refused to allow Reznor to record a side project with Ministry's Al Jourgenson — a band called 1,000 Homo DJs.

For this project Reznor sang lead vocals on a heavily industrialized version of Black Sabbath's "Supernaut." Rumor has it that Jourgenson pulled the recording back into the studio, added more distortion to Reznor's vocal tracks and re-released it with Wax Trax, slipping it, unnoticed, past the balking TVT.

Reznor became so enraged with the company that he promptly refused to record anything further. As a backlash he toured for nearly two years straight, something that made him a target for numerous music critics who accused him of riding on the success of his first album.

This stalemate was eventually "broken" by Jimmy Iovine, Interscope executive and producer, who was so impressed with Reznor's work that he bought out his contract with TVT — this being the only way he could sign Reznor and the only way Reznor could continue to work.

On his next effort, "Broken," released in 1992 on his new label, Reznor exuded the anger and resentment he felt from this situation. He's said he thought he'd alienate most of his fans with that album, but instead he won a Grammy for his rage.

"Broken," and its follow-up "Fixed," released later that year, showed a much tougher and angrier side to Nine Inch Nails, raw emotions that had only briefly surfaced on the first album. A certain self-loathing and "slave mentality" permeated the lyrics on the pair of releases. Two years later, in 1994, "The Downward Spiral" projected yet another side to Reznor's world of pain and hatred. It's a roller coaster ride of disturbing emotions swinging from the role of victim to that of aggressor in its lyrical content. As the name would suggest, "The Downward Spiral" is a trip through one man's emotional torment, a trip most people would be afraid to take.

Reznor's image has been labeled disturbing and bleak by some. Most recently, Rolling Stone referred to him as "just acting." In any case, it is still an intrinsic part of his work.

While "Pretty Hate Machine" still showed a glimmer of hope in its wave of angst, "The Downward Spiral" seems utterly devoid of anything close to optimism. Some reviewers have even likened it to a subliminal suicide note.

"I don't think I've ever written a happy song," Reznor

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says. "And even if I had, I don't think it would've ever been recorded. This record is a lot bleaker than anything I've done before, but there's still a shred of hope. It's not as present as it was on 'Pretty Hate Machine,' but it's still there." Reznor explains that this album is simply an exploration of some ugly, naked emotions and feelings.

"I really wanted to make ('The Downward Spiral') into a collection of music that would work together as a larger entity — a big chunk of music — rather than just a bunch of songs thrown aimlessly together without any sense of direction. I was more interested in creating a theme that would flow through the whole thing from beginning to end, maybe tell a story, like watching a movie," Reznor explains.

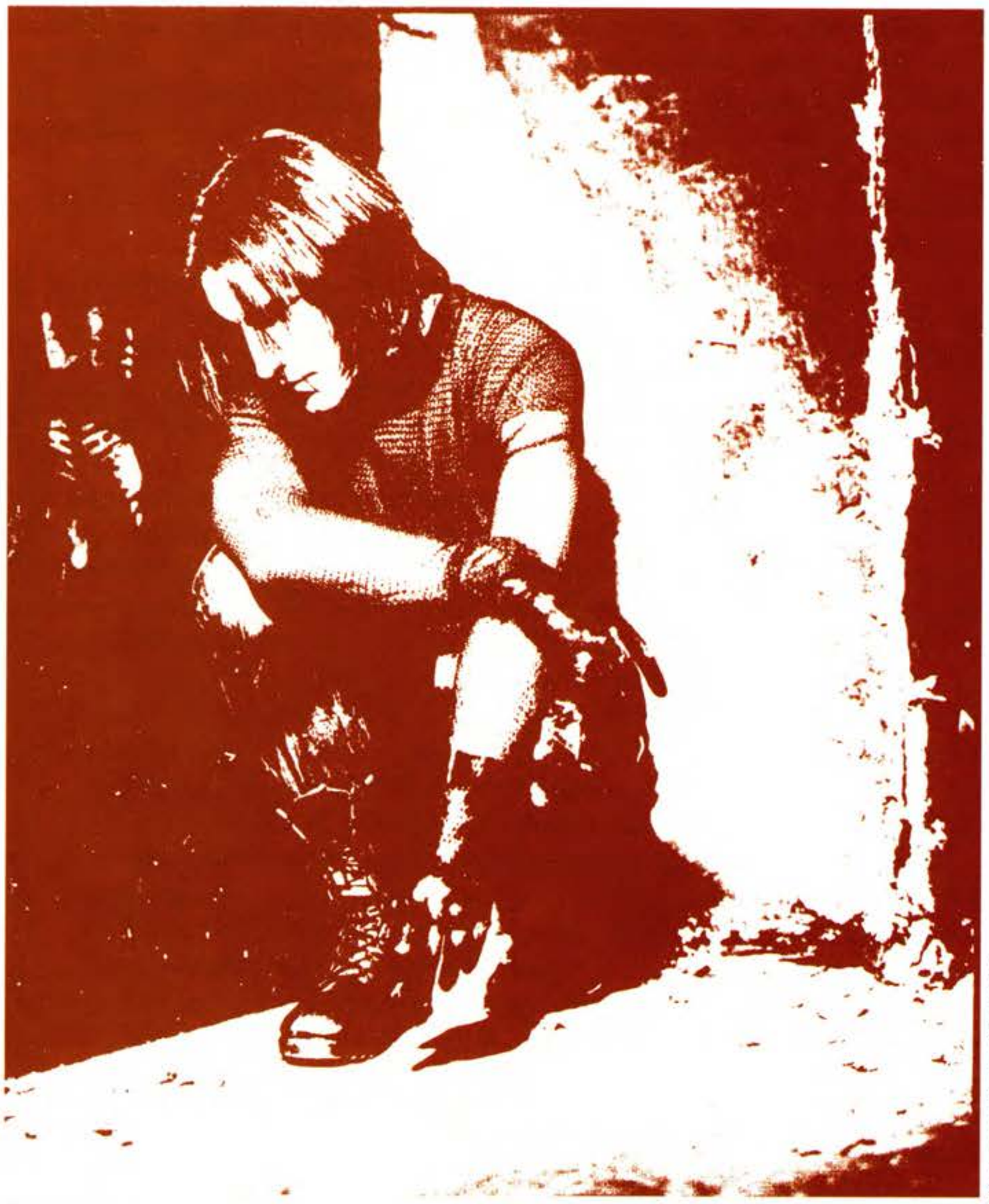

Photo courtesy of Formula

Trent Reznor

Reznor tries to envision a defined future for the band and says this was a record he needed to make for his career.

"I needed to break some boundaries — expand the limits of where Nine Inch Nails was capable of going. I wanted to be able to push things just a little further and get beyond the traditional norms of what the public expects from music," he says.

Some would say, however, that Reznor's conviction to his music and desire to stretch the bounds have led him to a shrinking availability of topics in some ways. Recurring themes and explicit imagery dominate all of his releases.

"When I really started thinking about writing music and the type of songs I *could* write with any conviction, I came to the realization that the only things I was capable of speaking about was stuff I'd experienced and knew," Reznor says. "I ended up relying on subjects that were highly personal to me. It's kind of frightening in a way, because it's kind of like exposing yourself to millions of people or baring your soul — that's me, those are my feelings, or at least they were at that time."

Reznor says the themes might get a bit distorted or take on slightly different manifestations after the songs get recorded, but essentially they reflect how he feels.

"I tried to relate the songs to situations I'd been in or feelings I'd had. Most of the topics I deal with are somewhat unpleasant — shitty relationships or just a general dissatisfaction with religion or the government. I feel if you can relate to that, great, and if not, oh well."

Reznor's latest album was recorded in the living room of a house he rented at 10050 Cielo Drive, Los Angeles — a city he's not particularly fond of to begin with. When music critics discovered the house Reznor was recording in was none other than the infamous home belonging to actress Sharon Tate where followers of Charles Manson murdered her and several of her friends in 1969, the subsequent flack in the press only served to amplify his dislike of the city.

Reznor claimed to have no knowledge of the house's history and stated he simply rented it because it was a nice place with a great view.

The critics were skeptical, however, and lashed out at Reznor, accusing that it was simply a publicity stunt, and still others pointed fingers, saying it just reinforced his already disturbingly dark and reclusive image.

"I think (living in L.A.,) made it a lonelier record. I don't like L.A. — I don't normally live there. I just went out to do a record in a house," Reznor says with undisguised distaste.

Although he claims not to have known the history of the house, it seems strange the first part of the album he recorded there is riddled with references to pigs, a word the Manson followers scrawled on the walls of the house with the blood of their victims.

Reznor's voice stiffens when asked about this.

"I don't like to discuss my lyrics too much," he says. "As soon as an artist talks about the lyrics in an interview, it ends up cheapening the effect. All of a sudden (the listeners) don't get to read into them what they want. I don't think I'm ready to demystify them."

While Reznor was recording in L.A. he found little time for recreation. Reznor says he basically holed himself up until the project was finished.

"It ended up taking longer than I'd planned. I don't have a big social life (so) I found it difficult to relax and have fun. The house was kind of up and away from everything. Sometimes I went long periods — weeks at a time — without leaving the house or even seeing anyone, and not even realize it. It (wasn't) the most pleasant situation to be in."

His reclusiveness as well as his reported perfectionism have kept him the sole member of the band up to this point. Initially Reznor records the albums alone — his only official band member being a Macintosh Quadra. Nine Inch Nails has gone through several line-up changes, most of which Reznor only took on board for touring purposes.

"Really, it came about out of necessity rather than choice. It's ended up taking longer and is eventually more work on me, but I've gotten used to it. I hope (the band) will someday be a more collaborative thing, but I can't just have people coming in and writing with me. I've just never been comfortable with that.

"I'm not doing it from the perspective of being able to say I did it all," Reznor adds. "But I haven't really found someone with the right personality or who complements my style of writing."

Reznor is evasive as to whether his present line-up, which consists of Danny Lohner, James Wooley, Robin Finck and Chris Vrenna, is one he plans to stick with for a while. But in the same regard, he has nothing short of respect for the musicians.

"They're all great. It was difficult at first, but the tour really pulled together," Reznor boasts of his band. "A lot of material we're playing now we'd never played live before, a lot of the new record stuff — stuff off Broken. And a lot of the parts are a lot more intricate now. I hope to become less reliant on computers and more on people."

On the final cut on "The Downward Spiral" Reznor sings of his "empire of dirt," but these days he seems to have more of a Midas touch when it comes to his empire.

Reznor has recently become involved in another side of the music business. He, along with his manager John Malm, have set up the record label, Nothing Records, funded by Interscope, the company that now holds Nine Inch Nails' contract.

Reznor and crew from l to r: Danny Lohner, James Wo

"The whole idea behind (Nothing Records) was for Interscope to provide a shell from which I could work in — where I could still retain most of the control over my music and the direction I wanted to take. They were very aware of what I expected when we started this thing."

Reznor started opening up the label to a select few bands as well as producing the soundtrack for last summer's controversial film "Natural Born Killers," an Oliver Stone project equaling Reznor's often disturbing musical tastes.

"The basic idea behind (the label) is one where we can provide the benefits of a major label to a whole roster of acts in terms of budgets — adequate money to do things such as distribution and promotion — but with total freedom (for the bands) to do whatever they want and not be fucked around in any way by A&R people. We've signed a few acts — Pop Will Eat Itself — we're basically just distributing their thing — Coil, Trust

Obey, Prick and Marilyn Manson. They've all got different niches. The label is something I hope grows in time."

The latter band, Marilyn Manson, was met with a good deal of flack and hesitation from Interscope executives. In the long run, Reznor shopped out the distribution of the band's first album on the Nothing label to Atlantic Records.

The band's lyrical content is as shocking as Nine Inch Nails', but on a slightly more outrageous plain, taking skewed sexuality and venomous ravings against society to an all-new level of distinction (or maybe distortion), backed up by thrashing guitar-based rock chords.

Photo courtesy of Formula

, Trent Reznor, Robin Finck and Chris Vrenna.

It's no wonder Reznor chose to produce and make this Florida band the first to grace his new label. He also made a guest appearance on the album and later chose Marilyn Manson as the opening band on his most recent tour. They certainly seem to share many of the same societal resentments.

Inside the sleeve and mixed in with the credits of Marilyn Manson's album "Portrait of an American Family," a passage seems to drip with Reznor's sentiments:

"You spoon-fed us Saturday morning mouthfuls of maggots and lies, disguised in your sugary breakfast cereals. ... We are what you have made us. We have grown up watching your television. ... This is your world in which we grow. And we will grow to hate you."

These statements also seem to mirror many of the memories Reznor has of his childhood.

Reznor's life growing up kindled much of the full-blown fire of his anger today. He was raised in a small town, Mercer, Pennsylvania, reared by grandparents who became his legal guardians after his parents were divorced. He felt alienated in the small-town culture and was bitter that there wasn't enough to occupy his time and mind.

"Nothing ever happened there, no city, no nothing to be a part of except the jock culture."

Reznor spent much of his time in the company of the television or the radio. His love of music grew as did his hatred of the imagery on the television which depicted a much grander world than he felt destined to ever know.

His restless alienation paved the way toward a more outspoken form of rage, one he would display through his music later in life and that would grant him a place in music stardom.

Many times Reznor has been described as making technologically rebellious music that screams loudly against a generation — his generation — that grew up being baby-sat by television screens, MTV and video games.

"There's probably an element of truth to that, I mean, I definitely was in a generation that grew up watching TV, and I do feel a need to say something, to rebel against the complacency that was trained into my system," Reznor says with a sarcastically bitter laugh.

So where does this rage take him from here? His work on outside projects and the responsibilities in his new record label would seem to be leading him away from the performance side of music.

"If I were ever to move outside the constraints of working with Nine Inch Nails, I would lean toward producing other bands. I'm not really that interested in the business end of the industry. I find that almost everyone you have to deal with is a scumbag and I just don't want to be a part of that."

Fans should not despair, however. Reznor seems to be comfortable with his level of success as it is right now. He keeps a modest outlook for the future.

"The band is a lot bigger than I ever thought it'd be this early on in my career," he says. "You kind of instinctively think, 'What's the next notch?' but the main goals I have for Nine Inch Nails are to put out music I feel is up to par — keep challenging myself. I don't think this record is going to be the one to catapult me into hit single status, but it wasn't supposed to. It just came out of my subconscious and it happened to be what it is."

And 'what it is' is a reflection and the voice of a generation screaming back at their TV screens, at the endless barrage of senseless imagery and repressive thoughts. As long as there is still teen angst and the fear of isolation, rejection and pain, Reznor is guaranteed a place on the *Billboard* charts.

BRIAN BASSET